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## **Cold War ideational legacies and contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia**

Parker, David John

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# **COLD WAR IDEATIONAL LEGACIES AND CONTEMPORARY US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS RUSSIA**

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in War Studies**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores how Cold War ideational legacies shape contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia and identifies mechanisms that serve to sustain them. It argues that post-Cold War US foreign policy towards Russia has been, and remains, heavily influenced by policy-maker and analytical elite understandings of, and experiences during, the Cold War. The thesis outlines, across three case studies, the influence of different, often conflicting, ideational legacies in different contexts and highlights the institutionalisation of some legacies which contributes to their sustained influence across different administrations. Influenced by these ideational legacies, the ways in which US actors interpret the world and the assumptions they make affect reality as well as reflect it, contributing to policies often detrimental to US-Russian relations.

This thesis is a qualitative approach to the subject. It draws on interview data and documentary analysis of US government policy and planning papers, official statements and speeches, as well as the speeches and reports of US analytical elites, to examine the role of Cold War ideational legacies in shaping US foreign policy towards Russia between 1993 and 2011. To assess the influence of ideational legacies a Constructivist approach is utilised and supplemented with elements from the International Relations sub-field Foreign Policy Analysis in order to locate the analysis of ideas and identity onto the domestic level. The analysis is applied to three case studies: NATO enlargement in the 1990s; US democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009 and; the negotiation and ratification of the New START Treaty. The thesis focuses on three main research questions. The primary research question is how did Cold War ideational legacies influence US foreign policy towards Russia in the post-Cold War era? This primary question generates two supplementary questions. The first supplementary question is what ideational legacies derived from US policy-makers understandings of, and experiences during, the Cold War and its ending? The second is what mechanisms sustained the Cold War ideational legacies?

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## ACRONYMS

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
AHF	American Hungarian Federation
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEEC	Central and Eastern European Coalition
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPD	Committee on the Present Danger
CRS	Congressional Research Service
DRL	State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
DPT	Democracy Promotion Theory
EU	European Union
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
FSA	Freedom Support Act
GWOT	Global War on Terror
HEU	Highly Enriched Uranium
HRDF	Human Rights Democracy Fund
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
IRI	International Republican Institute
MAD	Mutually Assured Destruction
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMD	National Missile Defence
NPR	Nuclear Posture Review

NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSC	National Security Council
NST	New START Treaty
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAA	Phased Adaptive Approach
PAC	Polish American Congress
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PNAC	Project for the New American Century
PRD	Presidential Review Directive
RFE	Radio Free Europe
RL	Radio Liberty
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitations Talks
SDC	Strategic Delivery Vehicle
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SORT	Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
UN	United Nations

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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

At the end of the Cold War there was optimism that the United States and Russia would forge a new, cooperative relationship (Skidelsky 2007: 1; Goldgeier & McFaul 2003: 1; Stent 2014: 255). However, nearly twenty-six years after the fall of the Berlin Wall US-Russian relations are mired in distrust and tension. As recently as July 2015 senior US officials described Russia as ‘the greatest threat’ to US national security (Carden 2015). Intermittently, across the post-Cold War era, politicians, commentators and academics have referred to a ‘new Cold War’. Despite this, the two states have also achieved considerable feats of cooperation during the post-Cold War era, particularly concerning arms control and counter-terrorism. Relations can best be described as cyclical. There are multiple factors that have influenced the state of US-Russian relations, including an increasingly assertive Russian foreign policy, competing interests and complicating relationships with third-party states. This thesis aims to make a contribution to understanding one of these factors: the ideational impacts of the Cold War on shaping US foreign policy towards Russia across the post-Cold War era. It is an examination of political culture and its Cold War origins.

The thesis explores the influence of ideas, expectations, mindsets and attitudes that developed during the Cold War and its conclusion on contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia. Utilising a Constructivist and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) lens, it also seeks to identify some of the mechanisms that serve to sustain these ideas and attitudes. The study argues that post-Cold War US policy towards Russia has been, and remains, influenced by policy-maker and analytical elite understandings and experiences of the Cold War – what this study terms ‘ideational legacies’. Its focus is on policies and approaches directly concerning Russia rather than analysis of Cold War influence on broader US policies (for such analyses see: Lieven 2002a, 2002c; Crockatt 2007: 24-25; Hoogland 2007; Scowcroft 2008; Lynch & Singh 2008; Brzezinski 2008: 89-91). In 2008 Sakwa suggested that despite repeated claims that the Cold War was over, ‘the beast stubbornly lives on’ with ‘self-reinforcing suspicion and distrust between the major nuclear powers’

(Sakwa 2008:266). The thesis demonstrates that this remains the case and seeks to explain partly why that is by outlining the influence of Cold War ideational legacies on US policies towards Russia.

The study outlines, across three case studies, the influence of eight ideational legacies in different temporal contexts and across different policy issues. It identifies specific legacies as having particular resonance with different domestic groups. It also highlights the institutionalisation of some legacies, which contributes to their sustained influence across different administrations and contexts. Influenced by these ideational legacies, the ways in which US actors interpret the world and the assumptions they make affect reality as well as reflect it. This has contributed to an inconsistent approach towards Russia. Some policies, informed by ideational legacies, have been detrimental to US-Russian relations whilst others have inhibited the United States from dealing with Russia in the same way that it does with other important non-allied states – a point made by several analysts, including Dumbrell (2008), Gvosdev (2008: 15) and Charap (2013a: 40-41), regarding differences between the US approach to Russia and China.

As Immerman (2004: 106) describes, an individual's perceptions and, consequently, actions are linked to understandings of the environment and context in which they operate, and policy-makers frequently rely on the lessons of history. To understand US policy towards Russia requires understanding the assumptions underlying it. The thesis seeks to identify the assumptions that were formed during the Cold War, concerning the nature of the international system and the US and Russian identity within it, and how these shaped contemporary policy towards Russia. In so doing it illustrates how Cold War ideational legacies have influenced contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia and how this has contributed to the failure to develop a consistent relationship with Russia, despite the benefits of doing so.

This study employs a qualitative approach to the subject. It draws on interview data and documentary analysis of government policy and planning papers, official

statements, meeting minutes, and the speeches of US policy-makers and analytical elites to examine the role of Cold War ideational legacies in shaping US foreign policy towards Russia between 1993 and 2011. In exploring ideas related to identity and role, the thesis is underpinned by Constructivist principles of socially constructed identity directly shaping perceptions of interest. Such a study has similarities to previous Constructivist analyses, such as Berger's (1996) analysis of how German and Japanese historical experiences and understandings of those experiences created institutionalised beliefs and values that influenced their policies. This broad theoretical approach to the subject is supported by elements from the IR sub-field of FPA in order to locate the analysis of ideas and identity onto the domestic level. The analysis is applied to three case studies: NATO enlargement in the 1990s; US democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009 and; the negotiation and ratification of the New START Treaty (NST).

The thesis has one primary research question and two sub-questions. The primary question is how did Cold War ideational legacies influence US foreign policy towards Russia in the post-Cold War era? This generates two supplementary questions: firstly, what ideational legacies derived from US policy-makers understandings of, and experiences during, the Cold War and its ending, and, secondly, what mechanisms sustained the legacies? Such an analysis provides two contributions to the existing literature. Firstly, and most importantly, it builds on existing studies of post-Cold War US-Russian relations by providing an empirical study across an eighteen year period and three policy areas, incorporating a range of actors, including administration officials, analytical elites, Congress, bureaucrats, and ethnic lobbies. The analysis provides spatial, issue and actor nuance to broader claims about Cold War mindsets, locating their influence in different situations. Importantly, in utilising specific principles from Constructivism and FPA, it identifies specific Cold War influences that combine to underpin the ideational legacies as well as some of the mechanisms that create and sustain the legacies, and contributes to more traditional analysis of US-Russian relations by identifying the influence of specific perceptions, ideas and understandings of how US actors expect their policies to be understood. The thesis demonstrates how these ideas, attitudes



and expectations have affected US foreign policy. It is also unique in highlighting both the positive and negative impacts of Cold War ideational legacies.

Secondly, although not the primary aim of the work, the theoretical approach employed provides a detailed case to test the claim of some scholars that FPA should be incorporated more regularly into IR analysis (Hudson: 2005; Hudson 2014; Houghton 2007). It also responds to criticisms that studies of international relations fail to sufficiently account for the role of history. Before detailing the theoretical approach in Chapter One, the Introduction will set the framework for the thesis by outlining its underlying puzzle, reviewing the existing literature and detailing the methodology. The chapter will close with the relevance of the project, its limitations and an outline of the thesis structure.

## **The Puzzle: Post-Cold War US-Russian Relations**

### ***The Importance of Russia to US Foreign Policy and Security Goals***

In detailing the ‘puzzle’ that the thesis seeks to address, the following section outlines: Russia’s importance to the United States; the challenges to cooperation; the cyclical nature of post-Cold War US-Russian relations; the inconsistent US approach towards Russia; and the subsequent problems this causes for US security agendas and international security.

Across the post-Cold War era Russia has been in a position to both significantly support key US security goals and to undermine those goals. Many analysts, including Lieven (2002a), Edwards, Kemp and Sestanovich (2006: 3), Legvold (2006: 163-166; 2009b), Graham (2009), Aslund and Kuchins (2009: 1-9), Larson and Shevchenko (2010), Charap (2013a: 47) and Stent (2014: xv-xvi & 258) have recognised the important role that Russia could play in supporting US agendas, highlighting that many of the most pressing international security issues could be most effectively tackled if the United States and Russia are able to work together and to build a cooperative and sustainable relationship.

Of particular importance are issues of nuclear security. Russia and the United States hold over ninety percent of the world's nuclear weapons between them. As such, stability and cooperation between the United States and Russia has been, and remains, vital to the management of nuclear weapons and preventing proliferation (Allison *et al* 1996: 15; Gerrits 1999; Shultz & Rowen 2008). As former senator Sam Nunn (2008: 137) observed in 2008, the United States and Russia deploy thousands of nuclear weapons on ballistic missiles with prompt launch capabilities that, he suggested, carries with it 'an increasingly unacceptable risk of an accidental, mistaken or unauthorised launch' (see also: Drell and Goody 2003 :19; Shultz & Rowen 2008: 64). The Nunn-Lugar Threat Reduction Programme, which secured and eliminated weapons and materials of mass destruction; Moscow Treaty (SORT) and NST, both of which lowered ceilings on the number of permitted strategic nuclear weapons, are examples of what can be achieved in terms of cooperative arms control. If the United States is to get close to Obama's (2009c) ambition of 'a world without nuclear weapons' then it must have a strong and stable partnership with Russia. Analysts have also outlined Russia's importance in ensuring that nuclear materials and technology are not accessed by terrorist organisations (Carlucci 2008: 115, Allison and Kokoshin 2002). This is recognised as a central security issue by US policy-makers and is clear in planning and policy documents. The 2010 US *Nuclear Posture Review* outlined the ambition to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide within four years (Department of Defense 2010c: vii) whilst the 2010 US *National Security Strategy* listed 'stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and securing nuclear materials' as a key goal (White House 2010b: 3).

Russia's location, intelligence resources and diplomatic influence also make it critical to tackling international terrorism and stabilising Afghanistan (Lieven 2002a: 251-252; Cross 2006; Stent 2014: 64-66). For instance, the Afghanistan Air Transit Agreement, signed in July 2009, had by June 2010 seen over 35,000 US personnel and troops flown to Afghanistan via the Russian routes (White House: 2010c). That number had grown to 460,000 US military personnel by January 2013 (Charap 2013a: 39). Another example is Russia's capacity to influence Iranian nuclear policy.

While disputed by some, many scholars have long assigned weight to Russia's influence on curtailing Iranian nuclear ambitions because of Russian access to the Iranian nuclear elite and ability to support or veto economic sanctions through the United Nations (Blackwill 2008; Haass 2008; Rumer & Stent 2009: 99-100). Russian support for sanctions against Iran in 2010 is one example, whilst following the agreement of a deal in July 2015 to limit Iran's nuclear ability for more than a decade Obama declared that, 'we would have not achieved this agreement had it not been for Russia's willingness to stick with us' (Baev 2015). Other challenges that would benefit from a resilient US-Russian relationship include energy security, security in Eurasia, drug trafficking, stability in the Middle East and less obvious, but nevertheless important, challenges such as climate change (Legvold 2010; Graham 2009a; Graham 2010a).

As well as being able to significantly support key US foreign policy and security goals, Russia also has the capacity to intentionally undermine them if bilateral relations are strained or unintentionally undermine them through Russian state weakness. Concerns regarding Russian state weakness were most prominent in the 1990s (Stent 2014: xi). Nevertheless, although the Russian state is stronger now than in the 1990s it remains important to US security that Russia is able to secure nuclear materials and to respond to ethnic conflicts on its borders, (Haass 1999; Stent 2005: 260; Cohen 2006). Also of concern are the implications of serious downturns in the relationship, such as Russian capacity to use its UN veto against the US, use hard and soft power more aggressively and shut US businesses out of lucrative deals (Cohen 2006; Simes 2007). As Stephen F. Cohen argued in 2012, Russia has the:

Capacity to abet or to thwart US interests in many regions of the world, from Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea and China to Europe, the entire Middle East and Latin America [...] these inescapable realities mean that partnership with Russia is an American national security imperative (Cohen 2012).

Russia has increasingly pushed back against US objectives, such as the US presence in Central Asia and NATO enlargement. During the recent downturn, negative Russian actions, from a US perspective, include unfreezing the self-imposed ban on selling the S-300 missile defence system to Iran and blocking US efforts to forge consensus on Syrian policy in the United Nations (Beaumont 2015; Charap 2013b; Allison 2013).

### *Challenges to Progress*

While cooperative relations with Russia would benefit the United States, there have been, and remain, challenges to this in the post-Cold War period. Specific issues, such as NATO enlargement, are outlined within the case studies and literature review. This section will briefly list five underlying factors that run across many of the issues. The first is the influence of domestic audiences and groups that benefit from perceptions of Russia as a potential threat rather than a partner, as well as the domestic benefits of strong anti-Russian rhetoric, such as electoral considerations (Charap 2013a: 44). Tsygankov (2009a: 159; 2009b), for instance, argues that in the policy vacuum in the United States after 9/11, influential groups within the American establishment, in order to further military hegemony and democracy expansion, promoted a tough stand against Russia, representing it as a threat to US values and interests. For a variety of reasons, including low US-Russian trade levels (Simes 2007: 105) and no effective pro-Russian lobby in the United States (Ivanov 2011), anti-Russian rhetoric is often, as Charap notes, seen as ‘cost-free’ in the United States (Charap 2014) whilst, as Sakwa notes in relation to Hillary Clinton’s criticism of Russia, ‘there are no easier points than Russia-bashing’ (Sakwa 2014: 557).

A second challenge is the difference in economic or material interests. Struggles over pipeline routes, such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline that bypassed Russia, advocated by the United States, is one example (Sakwa 2008: 259-260). Kim and Indeo (2013) outline the issue of competition in Central Asia and suggest that this is only likely to increase. The third challenge is the competing perspectives of, and

ambitions for, the international system. The tension arises from US ambitions to maintain global leadership and influence over the domestic politics of other states (primarily non-democratic, non-allied states) and Russian desires for a multi-polar system with regional poles of influence that respect Russia as an equal in the system (Goldgeier & McFaul 2003: 327; Ferguson 2003; Monaghan 2006; Donaldson, Nogee & Nadkarni 2014; Sakwa 2014: 122). Although the Obama administration has softened the rhetoric of exceptionalism, it retains the ambition of all previous post-Cold War administrations of US global supremacy (White House, 2010b: 9). This translates into significant divergences in perception of policy issues, such as missile defence, US military bases in Central Asia and NATO enlargement, and often limits the potential for cooperation on other issues (Cimbala 2012). Unsurprisingly, Russian political and security elites have consequently often tried to balance against or oppose the idea of US dominance.

A fourth challenge is, as Deyermond (2013: 515-516) outlines, the complicating effects of relations with third-party states. As she notes, aside from the anti-Russian views of former Warsaw Pact states in NATO acting as a barrier to increased cooperation, competing perspectives of, and relationships with states such as Georgia, Iran and Syria undermine the potential for wider bilateral progress. A final challenge is the unreliability of some of the information sources on Russia. Lieven (2000/2001; 2009) has argued that Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) ethnic lobbies and Russian dissidents and intellectual liberals provide anti-Russian narratives that are not representative of the majority of Russians (see also Sakwa 2014: 544). Similarly, Javeline and Lindermann-Komarova's 2010 critique of assessments of Russia's civil society development highlights the role of Freedom House in perpetuating a negative Western view of Russia's civil society based on 'sweeping claims' about the suppression of civil society based on just a few, high profile cases and also implicitly questions the credentials of the country or regional experts, ultimately arguing that the reports they produce have no systematic, nationwide data on public activism and NGO activity. Daniel Treisman's (2011: 361) analysis of Russia's 'return to the world' after the Cold War has parallels, outlining Freedom House's role in perpetuating misperceptions about the scale of political, civil and media difficulties in Russia (see also: Tsygankov & Parker 2015).

Scholars throughout the post-Cold War era have highlighted the potential for these issues to undermine relations. In 2009 Colton outlined the issue of self-determination as a potential challenge for US-Russian relations. Several scholars argued that the reset was fragile (Saunders 2010; Simes 2010; Kuchins 2012). Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 is the most important contemporary example of this tension affecting relations and Allison warns that it could even be the beginning of 'a new era of dangerous confrontation involving western states' (Allison 2014: 1256). Robert English warned in 2009 that even issues that appear secondary could erupt into huge problems with little warning and that the United States and Russia could be pulled into confrontation as they back opposing 'clients'. Although English had suggested Bosnia might be the most likely state, the on-going war in eastern Ukraine, where Russia is reportedly backing the pro-Russian rebels and the United States supports the Ukrainian government, including 300 US soldiers to train Ukrainian National Guard troops, highlights this danger (Mcleary 2015; Aslund 2015). Sakwa suggests that NATO enlargement and its increasingly wide influence and Russia's defence build-up mean that 'a hot war is no longer inconceivable' (Sakwa 2014: 567).

### ***Cyclical Relations***

Despite these difficulties it is, and has been, in the US interest to develop a consistent and mutually beneficial foreign policy approach towards Russia. In the post-Cold War era, at least until recently, as Sakwa notes

No fundamental interests divide the two [...] there are no fundamental ideological contradictions, direct conflicts over resources or major differences over the substantive issues that face the international community (Sakwa 2008: 251-252).

Indeed, even during the height of the Ukraine crisis Sakwa emphasised that ‘Russia is neither a consistent ideological nor strategic foe’ (Sakwa 2014: 594). Similarly, Legvold observed in 2010 that there were:

No deep, ideologically driven animus to sustain or support enmity between the two countries. There was no vast gap in the core international security concerns that both countries faced (at least in theory) and there was no comparability in power between the countries that would sustain a wide-ranging strategic rivalry (Legvold 2010: 23).

Other analysts have emphasised the compatibility of many important US and Russian interests and the benefit that closer cooperation would bring to both states (Tsygankov 2013c; Stent 2014: 255). As will be outlined, all post-Cold War administrations have, at least rhetorically, recognised Russia’s importance early in their first-terms. Despite this, post-Cold War bilateral relations have fluctuated dramatically, with three cycles of optimism followed by significant deterioration (Charap 2013a: 39; Deyermond 2013: 519; Mankoff 2012a: 160-162; Graham 2009b: 168; Antonenko 2009: 230; Dubinsky and Rutland 2008; Stent 2014: x).

The 1990s saw early optimism and signs of cooperation deteriorate, with disappointment on both sides (Stent 2014: 13-48; Carnegie 2000; Mendelson 2002a). Early successes in the post-Cold War relationship with Russia or the USSR, including the 1990 CFE Treaty; the UN-sanctioned Gulf War in 1991; cooperation over Germany’s reunification; the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme, which began in 1991; Yeltsin signing the Budapest Memorandum in 1994; Russia and the United States decommissioning nuclear warheads and Russia providing 1,300 Russian troops to take part in the NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia, inspired hope that US-Russian relations had a promising future (Israelyan 1997; Berryman 2000: 342). There were also indications that Russia was moving towards democracy and a free-market system (McFaul 1997; Ascher 1996; Sestanovich 1994a;

Sestanovich 1994b; White 1998: 142), whilst key Russian politicians, including Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Andrei V. Kozyrev favoured engagement with the West.

As the decade progressed relations deteriorated over issues including NATO enlargement, the scale and conditions of Western assistance to Russia (Israelyan 1997: 50; Sachs 1993; Lloyd 1993: 9; Stavrakis 1996; Rutland; 1999; English 2009), Russian perceptions of US policies designed to block Russian integration with the West, such as the maintenance of Jackson-Vanik (Pushkov 1994; Arnot 1998; McFaul 1999; Cox 2000: 263), Russia's domestic development and its relationship with its near abroad (Rubin 1993; Goltz 1993; Hill and Jewett 1994; Pope and Stangin 1994: 40; McFaul 1995; Blank 1995; Mathers 1995; Truscott 1997; Pipes 1997: 72; Rubin 1998) and the US-led war in Kosovo (Antonenko 2000; Blank 2000). Nevertheless, Russian support and its transition remained crucially important to primary US security and foreign policy ambitions and some significant cooperation continued (US Department of Defense, May 1997: 3).

The post 9/11 era saw a second upturn in relations. The United States and Russia cooperated over the campaign against the Taliban with Russia offering significant support and flexibility in the early part of the decade, even over highly controversial issues. These included sharing intelligence regarding North Korea, withdrawing from communication bases in Cuba and a naval base in Vietnam and not seeking to block US bases in Central Asia (Ferguson 2003). The two states signed and ratified the Moscow Treaty (SORT). The improved tone and mood of relations was highlighted by Bush's promise to ask Congress to lift the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment (although it was subsequently blocked). The United States, likewise, made several concessions to Russia, including support for Russian WTO membership and the creation of the NATO-Russian Council (Ferguson 2003). However, it was widely felt in Russia that the United States gave relatively little back for significant Russian concessions, a position some analysts concurred with (Saunders 2003; Ferguson 2002). The cycle repeated itself and relations began to



sour by 2003 with the US-led invasion of Iraq, the Colour Revolutions, competition for influence in Central Asia, US democracy promotion, increased centralisation of power within Russia, efforts to offer NATO membership to Georgia and Ukraine and the Russo-Georgian war key issues (Stent 2014: 135-158; Sakwa 2005; Aslund and Kuchins 2009: 115-138).

The Obama administration's reset marked a third upturn in relations. While some analysts were sceptical about its basis and durability (Kramer 2010; Kuchins 2012), successes included NST, Russian agreement over UN imposed sanctions on Iran, a 123 agreement on civilian nuclear cooperation and the creation of the Presidential Bilateral Commission (Deyermond 2013; Mattox 2011; Cohen, Simes and Wallander 2009; White House 2010c). At the time of writing US-Russian relations are deep into a third major deterioration, with significant and important disagreement of policy towards Syria and the war in Ukraine. Relations are worse now than following the Georgian War in 2008 when, according to reports, senior US officials considered the use of force to stop Russian military action in Georgia (Asmus 2010: 186-187).

### ***Inconsistent US Policy and Mixed Messages***

What becomes clear is that although there are barriers to progress, Russia is in a position to both contribute to key US objectives and to hinder them. It is in the interests of the United States to develop a more cooperative and sustainable relationship. Efforts to do this, despite positive rhetoric and some high points, have been limited or part of a mixed approach. Russia has been afforded great attention and treated with disinterest. Efforts to build a partnership have been matched by policies that imply Russia to be a competitor or potential threat. Lieven (2004a: 161) has stated that by the mid-1990s the American foreign and security establishment had set rolling back Russian influence in the post-Soviet space as a strategic priority. Stephen F. Cohen argued in 2006 that since the early 1990s the US has conducted two fundamentally different policies towards Russia simultaneously – one outwardly reassuring and based on the rhetoric of friendship and strategic partnership and one

recklessly based on exploiting Russian weakness and making demands for unilateral concessions. Legvold (2011: 14-15) argues that no post-Cold War president, including Obama, has had strategic vision for the future of US-Russian relations; instead, he suggests, they have focused, to differing degrees, simply on problems to be managed. Stent describes US approaches towards Russia as sometimes being 'internally contradictory', with sections of the policy community emphasising the opportunities that Russia offers whilst 'much of the American security establishment continues to view Russia with suspicion through a traditional Cold War lens' (Stent: 2014: xii).

The inconsistency in approach, and fluctuating and diverse perceptions of Russia, is highlighted by the vast array of terms used to describe Russia across this relatively short time period, as well as seemingly contrasting statements concerning its identity and role. As the case studies will make clear, policy-makers have referred to Russia in a variety of ways that often contrast, including 'partner', 'friend', 'rival', 'threat', 'democracy' and 'autocracy'. For example, then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice stated in 2001 that, although she considered Russia a partner, she still felt that 'Russia constitutes a threat for the West in general and our European allies in particular' (Rice: 2001). Although he led on much of the reset as vice-president, as a Senator Joe Biden, in 2007 identified Russia as, other than Iraq, one of the three principal threats to the US, together with Iran and North Korea (2007. See also: Biden, 2009). Despite her role in the reset, on leaving office Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's final memo to Obama concerning Putin emphasised 'the threat he represented to his neighbours and the global order' and suggested that Putin could only understand 'strength and resolve' and that there should be a pause on new efforts (Clinton 2014: 215). Obama referred to Russia as a partner in his first term whilst his second term presidential rival, Mitt Romney, described Russia as America's number one geopolitical foe. This mixed approach and diverse understandings were reflected in institutional practice, such as championing Russia's inclusion into the G8 but failing to lift the Jackson-Vanik Agreement or, until recently, to support Russia joining the WTO.

Of course, it would be very unusual for the entire US political elite to have the same view of Russia. However, the inconsistency in policy both between and within administrations, divergences between rhetoric and policy and inconsistent signalling towards Russia has been particularly strong. Given the sensitive nature of bilateral relations, these fluctuations can look more dramatic and are enhanced by strong messaging between different domestic groups. This approach towards, and framings of, Russia contributes to the ill-defined nature and future of US-Russian relations. Mixed messaging is particularly problematic in relation to Russia because, as will be outlined, Russia faced an enormously challenging transition and was seeking assurances about its role and identity in the new era (see: Sokov 2009: 73; Moran and Williams 2013: 202-206; Larson & Shevchenko 2010; Tsygankov 2004; Sakwa 2013: 205). As Shearman has noted, following the collapse of the USSR, 'Russia was left in limbo, with an uncertain sense of identity and a fundamental conflict among the political elite over Russia's future direction' (Shearman 2001: 254). Similarly, Savostyanov suggests that across the two decades following the end of the Cold War Russia 'has failed to answer the key question of its identity' (2009:115). Sakwa highlights that contestations between 'wider' and 'greater' Europe and that the conflation of 'democracy' with economic decline contributed to 'confusion over national identity and the country's direction' (Sakwa 2014: 164) and suggests that even in 2012 Russia was 'dreadfully unsure of its place in the world' (Sakwa 2014: 536). As such, in order to clarify US-Russian relations, support Russian reformers and contribute to the external validation of Russian identity, a consistent and clear message was required from the United States. This, as noted, has not been the case.

Scholars such as Medhurst *et al.* (1997) have noted that during the Cold War rhetoric was an important feature of the bilateral relationship. Considering Russia's domestic challenges, lack of clear post-Cold War identity and its desire to be recognised as a significant and respected power, mixed messaging had the potential to undermine reformers and push Russia away from the United States if policy-makers felt rejected (Larson and Shevchenko 2010). As the thesis will highlight, the comments of non-administration actors are also taken seriously in Russia and the rhetoric of opposition Senators, for example, or influential commentators can contribute to the mixed

messaging. This highlights the importance of language. As Onuf has put it, ‘speaking is an activity with normative consequences. When we speak, our words lead others to expect that we will act in a certain way – in accordance with our stated intention’ (Onuf 2013: 116). As recently as June 2015, European officials complained about ‘mixed messaging’ from US officials concerning the US response and position to Russia’s alleged involvement in the on-going crisis in Ukraine (Hudson 2015).

The inconsistent approach to Russia is highlighted in the highly contrasting policy recommendations of scholars and influential think-tanks and commentators concerning US policy towards Russia. Five broad policy-prescriptions have been common across the post-Cold War era: broad strategic engagement and partnership; selective cooperation based on mutual interests; integrating Russia further into the West and encouraging it to be a global stakeholder; engaging with Russia to reform it and; finally, a policy of neo-containment. Whilst the prevalence of each has varied depending upon the context and wider US strategies and objectives, each position has featured, to varying degrees, across the post-Cold War era.

Strategic partnership, which was particularly prevalent in the early post-Cold War period and, to a lesser degree, during the early stages of the reset (Salzman 2010: 10), encouraged the development of a broad partnership to address bilateral and global issues, such as the global arms trade, stability in Asia, security in Europe and managing the integration of rising powers. Its proponents argued that the United States and Russia had more shared interests than differences and that partnership was the best option for recognising each state’s vital interests (Ikle & Karaganov 1993; Mead 1994; Legvold 2009b; Charap *et al* 2009; *Commission on US Policy toward Russia* 2009; Aslund & Kuchins 2009). This recommended approach recognised that many of the issues central to US-Russian relations are intimately connected, such as NATO enlargement and European security or energy security and security in the Eurasian landmass (Salzman 2010: 12).

The second broad policy recommendation, and perhaps the most prevalent argument across the period under focus, certainly from those with Realist leanings, has been that of selective engagement in areas of mutual interest, such as non-proliferation, rather than on Russian domestic policy. Whilst recognising that there are too many barriers for full strategic partnership the approach suggests that trade-offs may be necessary and, whilst providing some support for Russian reform, the United States should not seek to impose democratic loyalty tests on Russia. Instead, the primary focus should be safeguarding core US security interests, such as nuclear disarmament, and the United States should work with Russia in the same way it does with other important non-democratic states, such as China (Duignan and Gann 1994; Haass 2000; Edwards, Kemp and Sestanovich 2006; Simes 2007: 48-50; Rumer & Stent 2009: 101-102; Blackwill 2008; Gvosdev 2008: 1&16; Stent 2014: 265&274).

A third common approach recommended, particularly prominent in the 1990s, has been to bring Russia towards the West by increasing interdependencies and expanding Russia's involvement and stake in international institutions. Such an approach, recognising that Russia is critical to the security of the West, is based on the assumptions that bringing Russia into international institutions and building closer links with the West will not only moderate Russian behaviour but can also foster liberal trends that will be beneficial to Russia and the West, through a more stable Europe, increased trade and cooperation on areas of shared interest, such as counterterrorism (Goodman 1996; De Nevers 1999; Haass 2008; Hahn 2009; Nation 2012).

The fourth common policy recommendation proposed in the literature, by think-tanks and influential commentators, has been a policy of seeking to directly and indirectly change Russia, even if this involves difficult moments in the short-term and policies likely to be seen unfavourably in Russia. While this can include Russian involvement in US and Western-led institutions, it goes further and includes policies such as direct democracy promotion in Russia and NATO enlargement to make the post-Soviet space stronger and thus less tempting to Russian imperial instincts. While seeking to maintain a stable relationship, this approach suggests less

compromise and greater emphasis on directly and indirectly fostering change in Russia (Brzezinski & Scowcroft 2009; Cohen 2009; Brzezinski 1994a; Rice 2000).

The final broad policy recommendation, particularly prevalent in the mid to late 2000s (especially following the Russo-Georgian war in 2008) and increasingly apparent in current publications is that of neo-containment, a term that emerged in the mid-1990s to describe a more nuanced version of Cold War containment (Lo 2008: 242). This position is based on assumptions about negative Russian intentions, such as using economic influence to frustrate US interests, asserting dominance over its neighbours, an increasing authoritarianism at home and an aggressive foreign policy. It links to geopolitical fears that a would-be rival power could control or influence much of Eurasia to the detriment of US power, influence and security and often refers to a new Cold War or Russian imperial ambitions (Brzezinski 1994a; Kissinger 1994b; Rodman 2000; Bugajski 2004; MacKinnon 2007; Lucas 2008; Cohen & Szaszdi 2009; Hanson 2015). Stoner and McFaul (2015), while recognising the need for limited selected engagement, urge containment of Russia and argue that the biggest danger in policy would be a failure to sustain declared policies, such as sanctions on Russia and supporting Ukrainian reform.

### ***The Rationale***

The problem becomes clear: the United States has been unable to build a sustainable relationship with Russia despite its significance to key national interests and international security. As the challenges listed above suggest, there have been several contributing factors. For instance, within the milieu of factors influencing US-Russian relations, the increased centralisation of power in Russia and restriction on civil freedoms, alongside a more assertive foreign policy, are important factors influencing US policy towards Russia (for Russian policy see: Adomeit 1998; Sakwa 2008; White, Sakwa and Hale 2010; Mankoff 2012a; Tsygankov 2013a).

However, this thesis argues that the failure to develop a more effective relationship is partly informed by the United States' own inconsistent and mixed approach. This has consequences for international security generally and US key security aims specifically. It is in the interest of the United States, Russia and international security for this relationship to become more sustainable, cooperative and predictable. This thesis will argue that this remains unlikely while the United States is unable to scrutinise its own perceptions, attitudes and ideas from the Cold War. For this to happen there must be a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the factors that contribute to the nature of the relationship.

## **Literature Review**

This study contributes to existing literature analysing the nature of US-Russian relations and, within this, factors that influence contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia. The literature surveyed is predominantly from academics born or working in the United States with a smaller selection from allied European states, such as the United Kingdom. The review covers literature from the early 1990s to 2014. It identifies four broad areas that the literature suggests shape post-Cold War US-Russian relations and subsequently influence US foreign policy towards Russia: an aggressive Russian foreign policy and the increasing centralisation of power domestically in Russia, competing interests, US unilateralism and dominance of the international system and persisting Cold War structures and doctrines in both the United States and Russia. Although some scholars lean strongly towards one factor, it is common for scholars to identify several factors.

That Russia is principally responsible for the difficulties in US-Russian relations, because of an aggressive foreign policy and retrenchment from democracy domestically, is a clear theme in the literature from the mid-1990s and this is a predominantly US viewpoint. In 1995 Blank identified a 'resurgent Russian neo-imperialism' as Russia sought 'to create new spheres of economic and political influence' and argued that Russian officials were content to take a threatening position towards Western presence in the region, even viewing it as a test of relations

with the West (1995: 396). Domestically Blank criticised 'tsar-like unaccountability and the absence of true civilian control of armed forces' (1995: 382). Umbach (1996) argued that Russia was moving away from democratic transition, with the military becoming dangerously influential. The shifting domestic situation, he argued, was central to an increasingly assertive policy towards the West during 1994 and 1995. Citing examples such as former Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev's assertion that Russia had a right to intervene militarily abroad to protect Russian, Umbach concluded that this position towards the West, interventionism in the former Soviet space and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) integration made bridging Russian and Western interests difficult (see also Lowenhardt 1995: 176-177).

This theme remained common in the literature in the 2000s. Bugajski's (2004) analysis of Russian policies, such as potentially stifling Eastern Europe's economic and political development, argued that Russia failed to take the interests of others into account. He gave the example of Russian opposition to NATO enlargement being based purely on the grounds that it could prevent further enhancement of Russian regional dominance and undermine Russia's efforts to assert regional hegemony. This and efforts to undermine US influence and prevent Western influence in CEE undermines US-Russian relations he argued. Skidelsky attributes the failure to develop positive post-Cold War relations almost entirely to Russia, describing Russia as 'the world's most revisionist power', seeking to recreate an empire and balance against US global influence (2007: 1). McFaul and Stoner-Weiss (2008) have argued that Putin's democratic roll-back and 'paranoid nationalism' during his first two terms as president were central to the nature of the US-Russian relationship.

Other analysts, like Sestanovich, highlighted Russia's 'increasingly confrontational course' fuelled by a hardened notion of its interests and 'by domestic arrangements that feed off international tensions, and by an enhanced ability to stand its ground' (Sestanovich 2008: 28). This, Sestanovich (2008) argued, and particularly the invasion of Georgia, forced the United States into a reassessment of relations, with it politically more difficult to maintain a partnership with Russia. Robert Harvey



(2008: 324) argued that Russia posed serious problems for the West since its re-emergence as a 'much-reduced regional bully under President' Vladimir Putin's quasi-authoritarian nationalist regime' (Harvey 2008: 324). Rachwald's (2011) analysis of the potential for progress in Russia-NATO relations argued that significant change was unlikely because of Russia's imperial nostalgia, promotion of authoritarianism and persisting Cold War objectives, including efforts to separate US-Europe security ties. Andrew Wilson's (2014) analysis of the Ukraine crisis assigns primary responsibility to Russian attempts across the last decade to spread its influence across the post-Soviet space and to prevent democratising trends in the region. Addressing specifically the Ukraine crisis, McFaul (2014) argues that aggressive Russian foreign policy stemmed from changes in Russia's internal dynamic and opposition to Putin's leadership rather than US policies and that Putin oversaw an increasingly anti-US position. He subsequently framed the Ukrainian uprising as a struggle between the United States and Russia and blames Putin's unconstrained adventurism for the Ukraine crisis and changes in US-Russian relations.

The second explanation in the literature assessing the thematic influences on US-Russian relations and US foreign policy towards Russia has been touched upon: competing interests. Further analysts who identify this theme include Elizabeth Wishnick (2009), who argues that the United States and Russia became particularly competitive for access in Central Asia from 2004 onwards, especially concerning basing arrangements and energy contracts. Graham (2010a) outlines how competing interests in the post-Soviet space have caused tensions in the US-Russian relationship. For Russia, Graham argued, it is a bulwark against external threats and a zone of 'privileged interests' while the United States has its own geopolitical and commercial interests in the region. Energy struggles in the Caucasus and Central Asia are one example (Graham 2010a: 50-57). Legvold (2011) lists several issues of tension that stem from competing interests, including the future of the post-Soviet space, energy supply lines and NATO enlargement. He described how the United States wants a strong NATO capable of operating out of area and free to welcome any state that meets membership criteria. Russia conversely sees NATO as a threat to

its own security and interests and protests against NATO expanding into the post-Soviet space or arming on its immediate borders.

A third theme in the literature, more prominent in the 2000s, is a US unilateralism and dominance of the international system that fails to take Russian interests into account, in part because of Cold War triumphalism (for wider analysis of post-Cold War unilateralism see: Hurrell 2002; Layne 2002). Lieven (2002a) argues that US structures and attitudes prevented it from being a 'satisfied power' and instead of beginning an era of cooperation after the Cold War sought to further expand its dominance and prevent rivals emerging. Goldgeier and McFaul (2003: 16) have argued that a recognition 'of the growing asymmetry of power between the United States and Russia enabled American officials to pursue policy initiatives unilaterally with less regard for Russian reactions'. Stephen F. Cohen (2006; 2010), argued that while the United States has been outwardly reassuring, its policies towards Russia were in fact treating Russia as a defeated power. He cites examples, including an increasing military encirclement of Russia and a failure to accept that Russia has any legitimate national interests beyond its own territory. Cohen suggests this attitude and policy stems from decades of having an attitude of opposition towards the USSR and that the Cold War's conclusion was understood as an American victory and Russian defeat.

Simes (2007), while recognising increased Russian assertiveness, attributed significant blame for the deterioration in relations to the United States. Simes suggested that in treating Russia as a defeated power, the United States felt able to force policies upon Russia without taking its interests into account. Indeed, Simes described the Clinton administration's efforts to deny Russia independent foreign or domestic policies as 'neocolonial' (2007:41). Tsygankov (2009a; 2009b) has argued that influential groups in the United States, including those seeking US hegemony, have presented Russia as a threat to US values and interests in order to expand US power and promote Western models – provoking rivalry with Russia rather than cooperation. Similarly, Roberts (2010), has argued that frequent claims of US victory in the Cold War influence post-Cold War foreign policy. This, he argues, feeds into a

belief in universalism and US leadership which can be seen through policies such as encouraging and imposing democracy.

The final theme is related to the third, and centres on persisting Cold War doctrines, mind-sets and practices in both the United States and Russia. This includes zero-sum mentalities, sustained perceptions of the other as the enemy and failing to evolve institutions for new purposes. Blackwill (1994) attributed renewed anti-US feelings among a significant part of the Russian political elite as stemming from cultural roots, including a commitment to restore the geographic boundaries of the former USSR and perceived failure of the West to recognise Russian security interests. Russian policies, such as a Russian drive to regain great power status, would, Blackwill argued, concern the United States and could lead to potential conflicts concerning the territory of the former USSR. Mathers suggested in 1995 that while some Russian analysts were seeking new approaches to security there was a tendency among some to return to established Soviet orthodoxies in analysing potential threats to Russia, seeing the United States as the most likely enemy. This trend, Mathers suggested, was the consequence of a decline in civilian analysts capable of developing alternative concepts, disillusionment with the failure of post-Cold War East-West partnership and strategic game-playing by heads of service to defend military budgets. Sakwa develops this, noting the entrenched position of USSR-era elites, officials and corporations and arguing that the 'vast security apparatus remained lodged in the post-Communist Russian body like a fish bone in the throat' (Sakwa 2014: 164-165). Allison (1998) highlighted the Russian leadership's inclination to draw simple parallels between anti-integration currents and anti-Russian tendencies. This, he suggested, indicated a failure to accept the real impulses among post-Soviet states or to recognise other influences, such as Ukrainian security policy with other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and non-CIS states, in anything other than zero-sum terms.

Foglesong (2007: 228), likewise, has highlighted the role of entrenched attitudes and perceptions, arguing that much US criticism of Russia is not based on detailed knowledge but from the idea that America has to champion freedom in Russia and

that historical experience with Russia, such as the Cold War, predisposes US policy makers to see Russia as a 'dark double'. Gvosdev (2008) has identified persistent zero-sum mentalities in US-Russian relations and argues that George W. Bush's approach towards Russia highlighted this trend over several key issues, such as Eurasia, and ignoring Russian interests. Blank (2008; 2009) suggests that fears from both about the intentions and capabilities of the other exceed the reality of threats and that, as both come to see each other's militaries, missile defences and nuclear weapons as increased threats, under conditions of political contest these fears could justify a new arms race. Lieven argues that much of this is a consequence of the fact that the greater part of the US security institutional apparatus was developed during the Cold War and left the United States with 'a state system of permanent semi-mobilization for war, institutionalised in the military-academic complex and the academic bodies linked to it' (Lieven: 2004a: 156). Brent Scowcroft captured this when he argued in 2008 that the United States was:

Trying to cope with this world with the habits of mind and the institutions that were formed during the Cold War [...] We built our processes to cope with it. Now it is gone, but not the thought processes (Scowcroft 2008: 107).

Scholars such as Rutland (2000), Lieven (2004c), Graham (2009b), Antonenko (2009) and Goemans (2010) suggest that reactions to Russian actions are less a reflection of actual negative behaviours but a reaction to what US actors expect to see, fuelled by this lingering Cold War mistrust. In 2013 Tsygankov argued that in the post-Cold War era both states have been unable to overcome some of the 'old perceptions and stereotypes of viewing each other as a potentially dangerous nation' (2013b: 179) whilst Stent (2014: 264), amongst a range of factors, identified deep, ongoing mistrust as an important factor in limiting progress in post-Cold War US-Russian relations.

## **Relevance of the Project**

The factors identified in the literature contribute to understandings of why US policy in the post-Cold War era has been inconsistent and mixed. However, the themes identified do not sufficiently capture the ideational factors that sit beneath the issues described. As Krebs (2010: 20) suggests, the importance of identity and narratives are over-looked in many analyses of US-Russian relations. For instance, while an increasingly assertive Russian foreign policy is clearly an important factor, it is also necessary to understand why and how US actors comprehend and frame Russian policies, based on historically informed expectations and experiences. Similarly, although there are competing interests, a more nuanced analysis of how US actors understand the US and Russian roles and legitimate interests in relation to specific issues can add explanatory power to why and how the issues became competitive and why the US has particular interests. As Gvosdev has noted, many of the post-Cold War analyses of US-Russian relations have taken a rational-actor approach, 'laying out common interests and threats' (Gvosdev 2008: 2).

Likewise, the common US view that the United States won the Cold War and that there remains mistrust are important factors but do not fully address the issue. They fail to sufficiently address how different Cold War-formed ideas and attitudes combine in different contexts, sometimes in a conflicting manner that further confuses policy. Furthermore, much of the literature does not adequately identify the mechanisms for how and why these attitudes and assumptions have been sustained or consistently assess the temporal and spatial aspects of the legacies and their influence in different settings and on different actors (for an example of the use of mechanisms see, Jervis 2013: 161-168). As will be outlined in detail, the United States has also supported Russia politically and economically, with critics often remonstrating about the level of attention offered to Russia. It would be more accurate to describe US policy towards Russia as inconsistent and so while mistrust and triumphalism are certainly factors, deeper analysis is needed to understand how Cold War learning varies in different contexts and can potentially even be beneficial to relations.

As such, this thesis seeks to add nuance to the first three strands and empirical depth to the fourth strand by identifying key Cold War ideational legacies, exploring the assumptions and understandings behind them and identifying the mechanisms by which they were developed and sustained. These legacies and their impacts are not sufficiently recognised and the mechanisms by which US attitudes and practices towards Russia developed and have been sustained have not been sufficiently explored. Better understandings of the ideational issues behind different policy approaches can also help to identify the challenges and potential implications of each.

Scholars have identified this as an underexplored area. Lieven, in 2001, argued that:

While the West has, not unreasonably, encouraged Russia to grow out of Cold War attitudes and see things in a ‘normal’ way it would be useful if we subjected our own inherited attitudes towards Russia to a more rigorous scrutiny (Lieven 2001).

In 2008 Sakwa argued that the dynamics of post-Cold War US-Russian relations and failure to develop sustainable relations in the 1990s and early 2000s was a ‘complex problem that needs adequate scholarly analysis, something that has been signally lacking in recent years’ (Sakwa 2008: 261). In 2010 Matlock argued that one of the most fundamental influences on US policy in the post-Cold War era and the challenges that the United States faces stem from the failure, ‘to understand the lessons of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union should have taught us’ (Matlock 2010: ix-x). Krebs has highlighted how realist, republican liberalism and commercial liberalism, with their focus on Russia’s relative decline, retreat from democracy and integration into the global trading system respectively, have overlooked ‘the importance of identity and narrative to foreign policy’ (Krebs 2010: 20). He argues that Cold War narratives shed light on Russian and US foreign policy in the post-Cold War era and suggests that future research could usefully analyse the

influence of Cold War narratives on specific cases. In 2012 Stephen F. Cohen lamented that:

Twenty years after the end of the Soviet Union, the relationship features more elements of cold-war conflict than of stable cooperation [...] and yet, in the United States, there is virtually no critical discussion, certainly no debate, about American policy towards Russia (Cohen 2012).

In 2013 Tsygankov suggested that, historical Cold War interaction contributes to the context of decision making and makes cooperation more difficult. He argued that scholars need to pay more attention to ethnohistory stereotyping in foreign policy (2013b). In 2014 he highlighted that, 'despite the significance of these two nations, there are few studies available that systematically assess the nature and dynamics of their relationships' (Tsygankov 2014: 520).

In analysing the nature and role of Cold War ideational legacies on US foreign policy towards Russia, this study seeks to contribute to understanding the dynamics of US-Russian relations and, specifically, the influence of the Cold War. It aims to contribute towards identifying the factors and mechanisms that continue to shape policy and to advance the critical discussion that the scholars noted above have called for. It responds to the concerns noted by seeking to better illuminate how Cold War ideas and attitudes shape contemporary US policy towards Russia.

Scholars such as Antonenko (2010: 229), English (2009) and Aslund and Kuchins (2009: vii) have emphasised the importance of US policy-makers understanding Russian perceptions and worldview if a successful, lasting policy is to be developed. Similarly, Crockatt (2007: 2) has noted that American policy-makers need to understand how others see their country and to recognise the gap between their own self-image and the way in which other states view the United States. These analysts

are correct. However, the same analysis of factors that shape the attitudes and worldviews of US political elites is also necessary if we are to better understand how post-Cold War attitudes and ideas shape US-Russian relations. Andrei Grachev, a former advisor to Gorbachev, suggested that the West missed two opportunities to support Russian reform and improve US-Russian relations: failing to support Gorbachev sufficiently and then not responding adequately to Putin's overtures to the United States after 9/11 (English 2009). The reset has now also fallen away. US-Russian relations, although subject to challenges and tensions, are important to international security. If a fourth upturn is to endure any longer than previous highs it is imperative to better understand, firstly, the drivers of US policy in order to recognise how entrenched assumptions, perceptions and attitudes have influenced previous policy and, secondly, the factors that could hinder or facilitate the future of the relationship.

Such scrutiny can contribute to the wider analytical puzzle by identifying additional factors influencing US attitudes and approaches towards Russia. This approach takes more seriously the role of history, narratives, entrenched assumptions and attitudes and, subsequently, identity than other approaches, such as Realism or Republican Liberalism which focus on Russia's relative decline and retreat from democracy respectively. Developing a better understanding of how ideational legacies influence specific issues and actors, across different contexts, and the mechanisms behind them can allow a deeper understanding of US foreign policy towards Russia and support more coherent thinking about international affairs. By recognising their role in specific case studies a greater understanding of the wider US-Russian relationship can be developed.

If the United States is to respond to international challenges that, as outlined, require the cooperation of Russia then it is essential for US policy-makers and analytical elites to develop awareness of how US actions and beliefs affect others. They must also improve ways of working with states that have different cultures and interpretations of actors or issues that US policy-makers may take as self-evident. To do this the US needs to become more aware of its own unspoken assumptions,



prejudices and preconceptions (Crockatt 2007: 35&132). To understand foreign policy one must explore how states interact with other states within the context of how they understand their own history and what they think is likely to happen. In the case of the United States, this thesis will contend that the Cold War continues to play an important role. As the world becomes increasingly more connected and security solutions require progressively more cooperation the US-Russian relationship will remain important. Lasting cooperation will require recognition of how interpretations of history influence contemporary perspectives and this research will seek to contribute to the analysis in relation to Cold War influences and policy towards Russia.

## **Methodology and Analytical Lens**

### ***Case Study, Time Period, Actor and Source Selection***

Three case studies will be analysed, covering the Clinton, George W. Bush and first-term Obama administrations. These are NATO enlargement in the 1990s; democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009; and the negotiation and ratification of the NST. This period permits analysis over different administrations and assessment as to how engrained Cold War ideational legacies are and how consistently influential they are. As Lieven (2004a) notes, issues such as the costs of global hegemony or fear of potential attack on the homeland could create new ideas or perceptions that could influence or supersede Cold War ideational legacies. The case studies selected are designed to allow analysis over almost two decades, across different issue areas and include a broad spectrum of actors. As the administration that straddled the Cold War and post-Cold War eras, no case study has been selected from during the George H. W. Bush era. Rather, the understandings of policy-makers from this period are restricted to analysis in Chapter Two, concerning how the end of the Cold War was understood. This is crucial for understanding the ideational legacies that developed through interpretations of the Cold War's end.

A range of actors are included in the analysis, including: administration officials; bureaucrats; Congress; analytical elites; non-governmental foreign policy organisations with significant influence on the shaping or delivery of policy, such as Freedom House, and ethnic lobbies. Including this broad mix of actors is necessary because each play a distinct and important role in shaping US foreign policy towards Russia and feed into foreign policy as expressed at the presidential level (Clifford 2004, Drezner 2010: 97). Congress, for example, has the ability to block presidential decisions and to significantly influence the parameters of feasible action the administration can take (Crockatt 2007: 211-212). Congress also directly funds organisations influential in the US-Russian dynamic, such as Freedom House and the National Endowment for Democracy. Highly public Congressional debates also highlight views of Russia within the wider foreign policy elite which can contribute to inconsistent or mixed messaging. Bureaucrats are important because often they manage relations, design and administer policy (even if not setting the overall direction), and provide the institutional expertise on specific topics. Similarly, an analysis on this level is necessary to identify institutionalised assumptions and culture. It is also important to identify distinctions between political parties or groups of political actors as this can contribute to both an inconsistent approach across the foreign policy establishment as well as an apparent incoherence in the face that the United States presents to Russia.

Analytical elites, defined as think-tanks, research centres and prominent commentators in the most influential US newspapers, are also important. While the most important influence is the information provided to policy-makers, Abelson (2004, 2006; 2011) and Arin (2014) also highlight the shift in US think tanks away from independent research centres towards advocacy groups with clear political leanings as well as the regularity with which individuals move between government and think-tanks positions and vice versa. This includes a significant number of policy-makers that forged their career in government during the Cold War and enjoyed influential positions within the think-tank community in the post-Cold War era. As Finnemore and Sikkink have suggested, knowledge is never neutral, especially for experts in the 'market of ideas' and so their move into government

roles can 'act as important mechanisms for social construction' (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001: 402). Peter M. Haas and Ernest B. Haas(2002: 30) also highlights the bureaucratic power of epistemic communities through exerting direct influence of policy-making by securing positions on advisory bodies. Think-tanks, as key sources of information (and staff) for government, can significantly influence policy-makers' thinking and policy formulation towards Russia. They contribute to messaging towards Russia through their analysis and commentary, and it is thus important to understand the ideas about Russia in the wider foreign policy community.

This influence is recognised by practitioners. Richard N. Haass, Director of Policy Planning Staff for the State Department between 2001 and 2003, noted in 2002 that of 'the many influences on US foreign policy formulation, the role of think tanks is among the most important and least appreciated' (2002). Senator Chuck Hagel suggested in 2006 that 'Brookings has been at the center of every national debate over the last 90 years' (Hagel 2006: 36). Similarly, a senior State Department NST negotiator noted her surprise at just how influential think-tanks were during meetings at the White House (Senior State Department official: 2014). Alongside key presidential advisors and senior bureaucrats, analysis of analytical elites can shed light on the core ideas within government that influence US foreign policy positions. Scholars have also highlighted the importance of other actors that, while less influential, still play a role in shaping the US approach towards Russia. These include Central and Eastern European (CEE) ethnic lobbies, liberal Russian dissidents, semi-independent NGOs and research centres and defence contractors (English 2009; Lieven 2000/2001; 2009; Tsygankov 2009a; Tsygankov & Parker 2015).

However, this thesis places particular emphasis on the president and his key officials and advisors. As the head of government the president is the key point of articulation for US policy (for details of how executive powers have expanded see: Schlesinger 2004; Hoff 2008). US-Russian relations also rely heavily on presidential summits because of a lack of institutionalised departmental relationships so the personal policy positions of the president are important, with the overall approach towards

Russia being set by the executive branch (Saunders 2003; Goldgeier & McFaul 2003: 16, Deyermond 2013: 503; Stent 2014: 260).

The research approach will be qualitative and come from analysis of elite discourse, official statements, policy documents, speeches, meeting minutes and strategic concepts. These are supplemented with original interviews with past and present US policy-makers from the State Department, Department of Defense, White House and leading US think-tanks. Elite interviews are recognised as an important strategy for reconstructing political episodes, corroborating accounts of events and gleaning information on the decision-making process (Richards 1996). However, as Gaddis has pointed out, to fully account for actor motivations it is necessary to understand 'what they at the time believed' (Gaddis 1997: 286-287). As such, the analysis will draw on a wide body of primary sources from each of the different case study eras. In utilising these categories of sources the thesis employs a similar approach to previous significant studies of post-Cold War US-Russian relations, including Goldgeier and McFaul (2003) and Stent (2014), and is consistent with the approach of many Constructivist studies (Checkel 1998: 334).

While the case studies include contextual analysis and focus on the details and approaches of specific policies and actions, there is an emphasis on spoken and written explanations of policies and motivations. This is primarily because this provides insight into actor understandings at the time. It is also important to understand elite discourses for two additional reasons. Firstly, discourse can not only shape specific policies but also limit or influence the policies that are possible or likely in the future either by constricting what is credible or by further entrenching ideas and narratives into the policy community and making them a part of political culture (Merton 1948: 195; Hoogland 2007: 77; Kramer 1999: 546-547; Berger 1996: 327; Sjostedt 2007; Nabers 2009). Secondly, discourses themselves can act as messages towards Russia even if they do not directly inform a specific policy.

In adopting an in-depth case study approach the thesis works in a Constructivist and FPA methodological tradition of problematising a politically important outcome, developing a line of argument and assessing this across time, seeking to document phenomena, through interview data and documentary sources, that have been insufficiently studied and providing in-depth description and explanation (Jepperson, Wendt & Katzenstein 1996: 65-68. See also Ruggie 1998: 867). As Hudson (2005:14) notes, actor-specific studies, as opposed to actor-general theory that seek to identify context-less generalisations about state behaviour and develop models for analysis, require different methodological choices, including an in-depth case study approach that recognises that many variables will be non-quantifiable. Each case study analyses elite discourse as expressed through the source types identified above to locate justifications of actions based on Cold War formed conceptions of identity and interests. As scholars such as Finnemore and Sikkink have suggested, the influence of ideas can be particularly evident if studies demonstrate the ways in which ideas ‘run counter to or undermine conventional conceptions of strong state interests’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001: 398). In identifying how policies, at times, undermine US-Russian relations, this thesis seeks to employ this approach.

### *Analytical Lens*

The study employs a Constructivist lens and includes elements from FPA. This approach is outlined in detail in Chapter One. Constructivism provides the main conceptual lens because of its core assumptions concerning the importance of ideas, identity, social construction, interaction and the influence of history on contemporary international relations. The use of FPA can locate the Constructivist analysis onto a domestic level by assessing issues such as the institutionalisation of attitudes and the influence of specific domestic groups. The two fields can be used in a complimentary fashion because of the thesis’s emphasis on assessing the ways in which human ideas and assumptions in one state shape the material world. Such a synthesis works in the tradition of Hudson (2005, 2014) and Houghton (2007). The two fields can work together to illuminate some of the workings of international politics and reveal Cold War influences behind US actors’ attitudes, ideas, practices and expectations and their influence on state behaviour.

The thesis's empirical content deals with features central to rationalism, such as security concerns and state policy, but the focus is concerned with the meaning actors give to their actions, their own sense of identity and how these identities influence their perceived interests. This affords a greater focus to political choice beyond systemic constraint and an examination of the role of historical influences on identity, the reproduction of norms and practices domestically and perceptions. Central to this approach is the idea that states are a conglomerate of practices and actors and that domestic and international politics are inherently linked. Such an approach can expand on more traditional analyses of US-Russian relations by identifying not only the issues of tension but why the actors view these causes to be important and what this means for policy.

### **Thesis Limitations**

The thesis has three primary limitations. The first, inherent in any study based on speeches, public documents and interviews, is the difficulty in accessing hidden motivations. As E. H. Carr (1940) noted, idealist rhetoric is often used to conceal or justify realist policies (see also: Hudson 2014: 61). Particularly severe rhetoric can also have concealed purposes. For instance, Foglesong (2007: 199) reports that Vice-President Bush told Gorbachev not to take the hard line stance in his campaign speeches in 1988 seriously, as they were domestically motivated (see also Lens 2003). Kramer (1999: 540) suggests that even secret documents do not always reveal real motivations as policy-makers may wish not to put their real motives on paper. For example, Casey (2005: 662) details how the foreign-policy establishment, during the period that NSC 68 was being drafted were, despite a private emphasis on haste, cautious with external discussion because of fears about the instability in the public mood.

In a study exploring issues of political culture this concern is relatively minor as the content is still relevant, centres on Cold War narratives, is a part of the US-Russia debate and is also part of the messaging that the United States signals towards

Russia. Similarly, as Herrmann (2003: 179) highlights, while speeches will very often have been ghost-written, thought and care will have gone into the words in order to express the official government position so remain valuable insights into perceptions and motivations. Furthermore, policy-makers have to approve them. Nevertheless, to minimise the dangers of sources hiding the actors' genuine intent, the thesis seeks to triangulate sources in order to identify key themes within foreign policy circles. Hudson (2014: 62) suggests that confidence in emerging themes can be enhanced by the use of texts spanning different time periods, audiences and subjects to identify consistencies. The thesis adopts this approach. Despite the limitations, the thesis recognises the importance of incorporating speeches and interviews because, as Schafer and Walker suggests, although 'verbal material is not the only indicator of an individual's state of mind, it is certainly an important and valid one' (Schafer and Walker 2006:26). The use of important policy-documents, such as national security strategies, to highlight themes can also limit the difficulties of using speeches and interviews, as such documents are significant to long-term planning and so are harder to use tactically. The consistency of answers by interviewees can also signify reliability. To place the comments into wider contextual perspective, each case study has a short, descriptive context section which outlines relevant issues that may have influenced discourse.

Secondly, in analysing cases in depth and across a broad range of actors, the thesis is limited in the number of cases studies that it can analyse to draw conclusions. Other case studies, such as earlier arms control negotiations or US support to Russia in the 1990s, could provide deeper insight and nuance into the influence of Cold War legacies in different contexts. However, selecting a case from across each post-Cold War administration and a variety of different policy areas rather than the same case across the entire period, does allow consideration of the influence of ideational legacies in different contexts. Furthermore, limitation of cases is inevitable in a project with a word limit and, considering the detailed focus required and the breadth of actors involved, more can be gained from three in-depth cases than six shorter ones.

Finally, the thesis is limited by both the number of US interviews and the lack of Russian interviews. In regards to the number of US interviewees, two points are relevant. The first is that, considering the time period under focus, there are obvious difficulties in accessing interviewees for earlier periods. It has not been impossible and some interviews were conducted with individuals involved in US policy during the 1980s and early 1990s, such as Ambassador Jack Matlock, a retired State Department official that work on arms control during the 1980s and Anatol Lieven, who worked as a Washington-based think-tank analyst in the 1990s. However, the majority of interviews were conducted for the NST chapter, partly because less information is available through other means for that more recent case and partly because it was easier to gain access to relevant individuals. In regards to Russian interviews, it could have been useful to interview Russian officials to compare their experiences and assessments with US interviewees on the same issue. For instance, during the research interviews were conducted with US officials involved in arms control negotiations. Their perspectives were highly useful but the perspectives of their Russian counter-parts could have allowed for a fuller analysis of the influence of US ideas and perceptions on the approach towards Russia. Such interviewees were excluded because of limited resources available for interviews, the thesis's focus on US rather than Russian policy and language barriers.

## **Thesis Structure**

This thesis is made up of seven chapters including the Introduction and Conclusion. Chapter One provides details of the theoretical lens employed and outlines a definition of ideational legacies. These are: stated understandings and expectations for the post-Cold War era based directly on understandings of the Cold War and interpretations of its end; institutionalised assumptions and attitudes that have continued influence, particularly in periods of uncertainty; and the tactical use of Cold-War narratives and imagery to advance other agendas. Chapter Two surveys Cold War speeches and government documents from across the Cold War era to provide an overview of key narratives and ideas concerning US-Soviet relations and interpretations of the Cold War's end. The chapter details six key understandings of



the Cold War and five specific interpretations of its end concerning the identity and nature of the United States, Russia and the international system.

Chapters Three, Four and Five analyse the influence of Cold War ideational legacies on specific policy areas. Chapter Three argues the three ideational legacies influenced the US policy of supporting and leading NATO enlargement in the 1990s. While each had different levels of influence on distinct domestic groups, the three combined made enlargement seem logical and necessary. The ideational legacies centred on ideas that enlargement would consolidate Cold War ideological and geopolitical victory, confirm the Cold War-forged US identity as an active, global leader and continue the Cold War policy of containing Russian aggression. Chapter Four outlines two ideational legacies that, it will be argued, influenced US democracy in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009. These were based upon perceptions of identity and historical narratives of trajectory. The first was based on a conflicted perception of Russian identity that over-stated the link between cooperation with US agendas and democratic progress. Expectations for Russian progress were balanced against a retained mistrust of Russia that contributed to an inconsistent approach to democracy promotion and enhanced Russian perceptions of US double standards and ideological instrumentalisation. Chapter Five argues that institutionalised knowledge and assumptions and entrenched Cold War framings combined to influence the negotiation and ratification of NST through three ideational legacies. These were a strong commitment to Cold War-era arms control that reinforced an adversarial structure, an ongoing framing, for some actors, of the relationship as based on competition and mistrust and, finally, a deeply held commitment to national missile defence (NMD) that, for some, was necessary to defend democratic allies from an inherently aggressive Russia. The Conclusion summarises the thesis findings and outlines areas of potential future research.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Theoretical Lens: Constructivism and Foreign Policy Analysis

*'If men define situations as real, they  
are real in their consequences'.*

W. I. Thomas (1928: 572)

#### Introduction

Having identified the research questions and set out the background to post Cold War US-Russian relations, the thesis will now outline the analytical lens that will be used to examine policy-makers' understandings of the Cold War and the ideational legacies derived. This chapter details the Constructivist and FPA principles to be utilised, explains why this approach is relevant to the research topic and outlines where it sits within, and how it can support, wider theoretical analyses of US-Russian relations. It expands on the theoretical overview provided in the Introduction to define what is meant by ideational legacy. In combining Constructivism with FPA, this approach is following the tradition of scholars such as David Houghton (2007) and Valerie M. Hudson (2005; 2014).

Using insights from of FPA enables a Constructivist analysis to take place on the domestic level in order to examine the influence of ideational legacies on domestic actors in different contexts and enables better understanding of the mechanisms that sustain the legacies. As scholars such as Carlsnaes (1992: 246) and Ruggie (1998: 878) argue, human agents and social structures are interrelated entities and we cannot account fully for one without the other. An approach incorporating the influence of history and past interactions in shaping how actors understand their identities and interests, and thus the ways in which they frame situations, can help us to better understand US foreign policy decisions and contribute to the wider debates concerning US-Russian relations. As scholars such as Checkel (1998: 324) and Katzenstein (1996: 17) note, Constructivism can access the areas that neorealists and

neoliberals ignore or afford no explanatory power, such as culture and the social dimensions of international politics.

### **Ideational Legacies**

Before focusing on the analytical lens, it is important to outline what the thesis means by the term ideational legacy and the Cold War influences that can inform the legacies. This is so not only because it is necessary to recognise the scope of what is under examination but also because it is potentially a problematic term unless clearly defined, as there are a series of interpretive and contextual issues associated with the term. These include whether the ideas that guide actors are ‘correct’ (as Matlock suggests ideational legacies can be, Matlock 2010), consistent over time or relevant to all actors. There are also more general difficulties in identifying intangible ideational changes as opposed to material legacies, such as the nuclear arsenals that developed during the Cold War (for an example of such study see: Hoffmann 2009). Furthermore, scholars have recognised the need to improve understandings of what the term legacy constitutes in order to better understand the specific consequences of historical eras. This was one of the overriding conclusions of a conference hosted by the Hamburg Institute of Social Research in 2011 that brought together Cold War scholars from across Europe, the United States and Australia (Hamburg Institute for Societal Research, 2011). As already outlined, this thesis accepts that many factors, including material ones, influence US foreign policy towards Russia and that there are challenges with identifying non-material legacies. However, a clear definition and justification of ideational legacies and their components, alongside specific theoretical factors to guide analysis, enables the thesis to focus on the ideational.

Within the ideational realm, the specific focus is how historical experiences, understandings and interpretations of the past and past interactions shape contemporary policy. As such the thesis is exploring Wendt’s assertion that ‘history matters’ when suggesting that past interactions between states influence their view of each other (Wendt 1995: 77). As Goldstein and Keohane (1993) argue, this can influence policy by providing actors with guiding principles, roadmaps or helping

them to frame situations.<sup>1</sup> Reference to ideational legacies will not imply any judgement about their validity. There is no assumption that the same legacies will necessarily influence all actors, that they will have consistent influence or that they will be applicable to all situations. Indeed, as will be outlined, some legacies contradict one another or apply primarily to only specific groups of actors. Rather, attention will focus solely on where legacies influence contemporary policy and policy debate concerning Russia.

The thesis does not seek to identify ‘rules’ or causality. Its focus is on influencing factors. The idea of influence rather than cause is consistent with Constructivists such as Ruggie, who highlight that ideational factors do not work in the same way as ‘brute facts’ (Ruggie 1998: 869). By influencing issues such as aspirations and ideas of legitimacy, they provide ‘reasons for actions which are not the same as causes of actions’ and ‘do not claim to understand the extraordinarily complex processes regarding constitutive rules fully (or even mostly)’ (Ruggie 1998: 874). Similarly, Kratochwil highlights the importance of intention, noting that ‘causal explanations within the action-perspective are fundamentally different from the causes of nature’ (Kratochwil 1989: 24). Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that Constructivism can, at best, make ‘small-t truth claims, because analysis of the social is permissive and partial, explanations can only be ‘necessarily contingent and partial’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001: 394). As Fay argued in 1975:

Men act in terms of their interpretations of, and intentions towards, their external conditions, rather than being governed directly by them, and therefore these conditions must be understood not as causes but as warranting conditions which make a particular action or belief more ‘reasonable’, ‘justified’, or ‘appropriate’, given the desires, beliefs and expectations of the actors (Fay 1975: 85).

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<sup>1</sup> Although not Constructivists, Goldstein and Keohane are included here because their work has been influential on, or is referenced by, some Constructivists (see, Hass and Hass 2002: 596) and provides an example of early attempts by International Relations theorists to deal with ideas and to address their effects and why they matter.

The legacies examined fall within three broad areas: ideas concerning the nature of the international system; the role and identity of the United States within this (and subsequently the US position in relation to Russia and the post-Soviet space) and; finally, Russia's role and identity (and, subsequently, US expectations of Russia). Grouping of ideas is common in ideational analysis. Goldstein and Keohane (1993: 7-11), in their analysis of beliefs held by individuals, for example, distinguish between three types of belief: world views, principled beliefs and causal beliefs. Legacies need not necessarily be entirely new ideas or perspectives, but can have been renewed or reinforced directly by US experiences during, and narratives of, the Cold War. For instance, as will be outlined, the Cold War reinforced long-standing ideas of US exceptionalism but altered the direction of US leadership.

Across these three areas, ideational legacies will be built upon two broad categories of Cold War understandings. The first are stated understandings and expectations for the post-Cold War era. These expectations will be based directly on understandings of the Cold War and, in particular, interpretations of its end and what this meant for the international system, and the United States and Russia within it. As Weldes (1996: 280-281) has argued, the broad representations that state officials create for themselves, others and the international system enable the state to act, as these representations provide the framework for actors to describe the situation to themselves. This can subsequently make national interests and policy options appear commonsense. As Katzenstein puts it, what is important is 'how identities and norms influence the ways in which actors define their interests in the first place' (Katzenstein 1996: 30). As such, understanding actor interpretations is crucial for understanding policy. Similarly, Larrabee suggests that, 'in international politics, perceptions are often more important than reality. Indeed, they create their own reality' (Larrabee 1993: 194). As Wendt (1999) emphasises, identities are partly rooted in an actor's self-understanding. A core element of ideational legacies, then, are stated expectations for the post-Cold War era based on US actors' interpretations of the Cold War and how this shapes their ideas of identity and interests for the post-Cold War era.

The second important Cold War influence that will inform ideational legacies are ideas, attitudes and practices that formed during the course of the Cold War rather than at its end. These are important because during periods of post-Cold War uncertainty these may be reverted to in order to enable US actors to decode incoming information (especially when Russia does not conform to US expectations) and may also influence policy towards Russia through entrenched attitudes, institutionalised ideas and assumptions or specific institutional missions. Koslowski and Kratochwil (1994: 216) suggest that changes in international politics occur when the beliefs and identities of actors change, which consequently alters the rules that are constitutive of their political practices. However, entrenched legacies can highlight that change does not necessarily alter ideas. As Berger outlines, while simple beliefs can be easily discarded, more 'abstract or emotionally laden beliefs and values' are 'more resistant to change' (Berger 1996: 326). Analysis of contemporary international politics has located examples of this. For instance, Robert H. Johnson (1994: 180) argues that George H. W. Bush's decisions on the Gulf War were heavily influenced by his personal history in WWII and the Cold War and that in a situation of uncertainty he fell back into a familiar framework of good vs. evil.

Holsti's (1967) conclusion in 1976 that beliefs were more likely to influence foreign policy when officials were faced with uncertainty because of the need to rely on pre-existing beliefs and Copeland's (2000) analysis of the ongoing importance of uncertainty in international politics are particularly relevant to post-Cold War US-Russian relations with their cyclical dynamic and significant fluctuations. US actions and framings in times of uncertainty can thus help to unveil the influence of Cold War ideational legacies. As Ruggie suggested in 1998, the 'distinction between finding and making circumstances is especially critical at times of discontinuity' (Ruggie 1998: 877). It can also help to identify ideas that formed during the Cold War that persist despite the changed context, indicating the power of entrenched or institutionalised ideas and attitudes. These can be considered fall-back or entrenched Cold War understandings and influences. Connected to this category of influence are organisational issues that developed during the Cold War that can constrain post-

Cold War assumptions and ideas – such as established practices for how to achieve specific goals or the institutional origins and expertise of an organisation that can influence policy despite a new context. These are organisational factors that can constrain ideas and assumptions rather than broad ideas about identity and interests themselves.

The differences between stated and entrenched Cold War understandings highlight a distinction between explicit expectations and implicit and entrenched attitudes and practices, the drivers of which may in some instances not be fully recognised by the actor. Both, this thesis will suggest, play a role in US foreign policy towards Russia by enabling actors to frame a situation according to perceptions about identity and subsequent interests and expectations. Although not a Cold War influence in the same way, it is also important to note that Cold War narratives can potentially be used tactically by exploiting the on-going currency of Cold War language and framings to further other agendas, such as the benefits of being engaged against an ‘other’. Scholars have explored the role of the ‘other’ (Campbell 1998; Neumann 1999) and analysts have argued that this has been identifiable in the post-Cold War era. Tsygankov (2009a; 2009b), for example, argues that in the policy vacuum after 9/11 influential groups within the American establishment, in order to further military hegemony and democracy expansion, promoted a tough stand against Russia, representing it as a threat to US values and interests (see also: Lieven 2000/2001). These can be termed functional purposes rather than being necessarily formed through conceptions of identity, although they remain highly relevant to identity because their potency lies in audiences recognising and responding to the Cold War narratives and framings that they utilise as well as the fact that their use further embedding Cold War narratives within political culture. Although not the primary focus of the research, where appropriate, this thesis will make limited reference to this, as such practices can contribute to sustaining Cold War imagery and ideas in political culture.

## **A Constructivist Lens**

To analyse the influence of ideational legacies on foreign policy a conceptual position of analysis is needed that focuses on ideas and identity. Constructivism provides an approach for this by illuminating the importance of human actions and assumptions (Adler 1997; Hopf 1998; Onuf 2013: 3-20). For Constructivism, an actor's decision-making process is not simply dictated by material capabilities. As Checkel (1998: 325-326) notes, Constructivism makes the two key assumptions that the environment in which actors take action is social as well as material and that the setting can provide actors with understandings of their interests, meaning that material conditions are given sense only by the social context through which they are interpreted. This is neatly captured by Wendt's (2001: 96) central argument that the meaning of power and the content of interests are largely a function of ideas (see also: Weldes 1996). Katzenstein (1996: 2-4) has argued that a key element of security policy is the constructed identity of states, government and others actors and policy is thus the consequence of not only material capabilities but also of interests that are constricted through social interaction. He stresses that domestic and international environments have effects as they are the arenas in which actors contest norms and construct and reconstruct identity through political and social processes and, within this, history 'leaves an imprint on state identity' (Katzenstein 1996: 23-25). As Risse and Sikkink outline, Constructivism problematises interests and relates them to the identity of actors, arguing that identities 'define the range of interests of actors' and 'provide measure of inclusion and exclusion by defining a social "we" and delineating the boundaries against the "others"' (Risse and Sikkink 1999: 8-9).

Constructivism, because of its focus on identity and social constructions of understandings and interests, provides an approach to consider the importance of how factors, such as interpretations of history and previous interactions, help actors to frame situations specifically to their own socially constructed reality in a way that other International Relations theories cannot. Constructivism differs from theories such as Neorealism (see: Waltz 2001), with underlying materialist and individualist ontologies, that portray states as functionally similar units in an anarchic international system that make objectively rational decisions based on relative



capabilities, security and national interests. Such approaches largely neglect the role of ideas and individual perceptions in influencing the ways in which states understand their context. As Koslowski and Kratochwil (1994: 218-222) outline, the actions of states immediately following the end of the Cold War did not follow the materially driven rationality predicted by realists such as Mearsheimer (1990a; 1990b). They cannot tackle the influence of ideas and cognitive perceptions because of their incomplete understanding of rationality. As scholars such as Katzenstein (1996: 13) and Yee (1996: 69) suggest, they sidestep the different motivations and cognitive complexity that can inform policy. A Constructivist approach representing actors as social beings that cannot be separated from normative understandings of context, specifically understandings derived from historical understandings, can address these gaps. These understandings, and their influence on actors' conceptions of identity and subsequently interest, can lead to policies that differ from rationalist models based on relative material and power gains. This thesis seeks to demonstrate that one important way that this happens is through historically informed ideational legacies.

Because Constructivism's core element is that identities and interests are mutually constituted through interaction or, as Wendt (1992: 392) puts it, 'knowledgeable practices constitute subjects', a Constructivist approach is often used for studies assessing relationships between two or more states. However, it is also relevant for analysis of foreign policy directed towards one other state with an important shared history. This is so for two reasons. Firstly, the concepts on which the foreign policies are formed (and many of the legacies based on), such as sovereignty and status (such as 'great power'), are concepts that have been mutually formed at the international level and there are shared understandings or acknowledgement of these concepts between states, even if they contest the policies that stem from these concepts. These are what Searle (1995) refers to as 'social facts' – things that have no material base but exist because actors collectively recognise them and act as though they do exist. As Koslowski and Kratochwil (1994: 225) argue, political interactions occur on the basis of at least partially shared understandings, even if contested. As Wendt (1987: 338) notes, 'human agents and social structures are [...] mutually implicating

entities'. As such, even though only analysing the policy of one state, that state is still operating under internationally shared social concepts.

Secondly, the legacies that the thesis focuses on were formed through interaction with the Soviet Union and the wider international context. As such, though the focus may be on the foreign policy of one state looking at national ideas, these stem from interaction and former mutually constituted assumptions, such as the US and the USSR being enemies. As such, the ideas that shape policy by influencing how a situation is framed are influenced by issues of identity and interest that were developed during a process of intense interaction and cannot be considered to have been formed in national isolation or to not relate to the current international context. However, for this study there is a need to apply Constructivist assumptions to domestic structures because of the thesis's focus on domestic actors in one state and to give the approach a level to work from. As such, the Constructivist approach is supported by particular elements from FPA that focus on the role of domestic actors.

### **Core and Specific Elements of Constructivism**

Whilst Constructivism is relevant for this research topic, the school has different strands (Fierke 2007; Hopf 2008; Ruggie 1998: 878-882; Zehfuss 2002: 1-23) and not all influential Constructivist assumptions are appropriate for a research topic focusing on the foreign policy of one state. The core Constructivist elements outlined above will remain at the centre of the analysis. These include the social construction of identity, identity influencing the way in which actors frame situations and understand their interests (Weldes 1996; Merton 1948), and the idea of identity being partly created through comparison of self with others. Of particular importance will be how states define themselves and others by type and role. As Wendt (2001:193-245) outlines, states have type and role identities. Type identities describe their social category (such as democratic, European or capitalist) and certain types are perceived to have more or less legitimacy. Role identities refer to the relationship between states, such as friend, enemy or rival.

However, because of the thesis's particular focus on actors within one state and the role of history and national ideas rather than necessarily shared assumptions, some influential elements will not be relevant. The most obvious is the rejection of Wendt's functional use of states as real, unitary actors with anthropomorphic qualities like desires, beliefs and intentionality. While recognising that states interact as state-society complexes, Wendt (2001: 197) argues that their internal structure constitutes them as concrete individuals who, as agents, form governments. Such an approach will not facilitate better understandings of domestic level mechanisms that sustain and support legacies, such as the institutionalisation of attitudes and practices within organisations. Wendt's approach is also at the more structural end of the Constructivist spectrum which is, again, not appropriate for this study because of its focus on one state, rather than system level properties like anarchy. Rather, the approach must recognise the unique influences of domestic actors that can shape policy. As scholars such as Lomas (2005: 349) and Smith (2001) suggest, by treating states as people Wendt neglects the divisions of thoughts underlying government actions. To remove the voluntarism of human agency and focus entirely on socially shared knowledge would be inappropriate for a study looking into the role of domestic actors in one state. More relevant are Constructivist lenses that highlight the role of history and previous interactions, private knowledge and ideas, domestic actors and entrenched or self-perpetuating cultures. These specific strands are outlined in the following sections, alongside a brief explanation of their relevance to post-Cold War US-Russian relations.

### ***History and Previous Interactions***

When analysing the influence of Cold War ideational legacies on contemporary policy, there is a clear need to incorporate previous historical interactions and historical experiences as they directly inform the content of, and assumptions behind, those legacies. This is so both for stated expectations for the post-Cold War era based on understandings of the Cold War's end, and entrenched or fall-back understandings because strong views of Russian and US identities were developed during the Cold War that influence contemporary framings. As will be demonstrated, policy-makers frequently use historical analogies to frame and understand post-Cold

War US-Russian tensions and use the Cold War as a central reference point in framing US-Russian relations – often in terms of moving away from the Cold War or a return to the Cold War during periods of tension.

Within International Relations, Constructivism provides the best platform for exploring the influence of historical experiences and interactions. Although it does not form a central feature of his own approach, and he uses it in a structural sense, Wendt (1987: 356) has noted that social dynamics are inseparable from spatial and temporal structures and that time and space must be incorporated directly into theoretical and concrete research. This idea is expanded on by Katzenstein who argues that history is more than just the progressive search for efficiency but ‘is a process of change that leaves an imprint on state identity’ which can help to explain why similar situations are treated differently at different times (Katzenstein 1996: 1-2&23). He highlights that historical interactions with different social environments, international and domestic, are important in constructing national identity, citing the example of how a long history of universal empires, regional kingdoms and sub continental empires have influenced Asian states (166: 23-24). His 2003 study of different counterterrorism responses to 9/11 between Japan, Germany and the United States highlighted how different historical experiences and self-identification shaped interpretation of self and other and subsequent perceptions of the event and appropriate response. As such, analysis of Cold War legacies must incorporate historical context and seek to identify the historical imprint on state identity.

### ***Private Knowledge***

One important feature of post-Cold War US-Russian tensions is the divergence of understandings between the two states about the status and role of each in the international system, with competing views of the legitimacy of US leadership a particularly key issue. As such, whilst recognising that the influence of mutually constituted assumptions is essential, so too is identifying individual state assumptions and knowledge that is not shared. This is of particular importance when analysing the influence of understandings of the Cold War’s end, where US

understandings differ significantly from many Russian understandings. For example, as Sakwa (2014: 112-115) notes, Russian policy-makers understood the end of the Cold War as a shared victory, not a defeat for Russia (see also, Westad 1997; Gvosdev 2006; Deudney and Ikenberry 2009: 45; Karaganov 2010; Sakwa 2013). An approach for analysing unique national thinking is also important because of this thesis' focus on the foreign policy of one state. The issue of individual state knowledge is addressed in the Constructivist literature, which provides an approach for assessing national ideas.

Especially useful is Wendt's concept of private knowledge, which he defines as beliefs that some actors hold that others do not (often from domestic or ideological considerations). Private knowledge, Wendt argues, can be a determinant of how states frame international situations and define their national interests (Wendt 2001: 140-141). A study focusing on an individual state and private knowledge sits closer to the ideas side of Constructivism rather than to norms, as distinguished by Risse and Sikkink (1999), particularly when exploring US conceptions of self-identity. The authors highlight that 'while ideas are about cognitive commitments, norms make behavioural claims on individuals [...] ideas are thus usually individualistic while norms have intersubjective qualities' (Risse and Sikkink 1999: 7). There is no rejection of norms because it is clear that entrenched understandings may stem from a contest over norms and Russia failing to conform to US expectations in the post-Cold War international system, such as expectations for the spread of democracy. However, expectations will often be based on ideas rather than accepted norms, hence a closer focus on ideas will be required.

### ***Domestic Actors***

To understand the influence of Cold War ideational legacies at the domestic level and in different contexts the thesis necessarily incorporates a range of domestic actors, including elected officials, bureaucrats and think-tanks. As noted, this is an area where Constructivism has limitations and this is recognised by some Constructivists. Checkel (1998: 325), for instance, argues that Constructivism

overemphasises the role of social structures because it lacks a theory of agency and suggests that it must do more to specify the actors and mechanisms that bring about change and under what scope conditions. Similarly, Ruggie (1998: 878) emphasises the importance of domestic agency, such as individual leaders' powers of persuasion, in constructing national interests, which will be influenced by identity and aspirations and the subsequent need for Constructivism to place more emphasis on agency.

Some Constructivists, such as Koslowski and Kratochwil (1994: 216&222), seek to include the role of individuals and other domestic actors in understanding change in international relations rather than focusing solely on state-centred systemic analysis. Like Wendt, they argue that change occurs when actors change rules and norms through their interactions. However, their understanding of actors is broader than states, and they attribute significance to individual decision makers and institutions in shaping structure. Central to this approach is the position that the reproduction of the practices of states depends on the reproduction of practices of domestic actors such as individuals and groups. Changes in international politics occur when the beliefs and identities of these domestic actors change, which consequently alters the rules and norms that are constitutive of their political practices (Koslowski and Kratochwil 1994: 216). A key assumption is thus that states are an assembly of practices and actors and that domestic and international politics are intrinsically linked. Such an approach allows analysis of not only domestic actors affecting international politics but also of internal processes and changes that alter the identity of the state. By locating clearly identified actors within the defined scope of the Cold War and its end the approach will have similarities to Constructivists such as Koslowski and Kratochwil but will utilise aspects of FPA to further ground the analysis at the domestic level.

### ***Self-Perpetuating Cultures and Behaviours***

As noted, many analysts have highlighted apparent continuities between the US-Soviet relationship and post-Cold War US-Russian relationship and suggested that

foreign policy and security organisations in both states continue to view each other through a prism of mistrust, despite the fundamentally different context. This links directly to the idea of entrenched or fall-back ideas. Constructivism can provide a platform to address this through its attention to self-perpetuating cultures and behaviours that fail to adapt to changing circumstances. There are two particularly relevant elements to this that can guide empirical research. The first is the way that ideas can become institutionalised in organisations and bureaucracies and continue to influence how actors frame situations. This is particularly relevant to this case considering the length of the Cold War and that it dominated US foreign policy for over four decades. Finnemore and Sikkink (2001) highlight that the strength and longevity of ideas often depend on to how well embodied they have become in relevant institutions. Goldstein and Keohane make a similar case, arguing that once ideas become institutionalised they ‘constrain public policy. Policies are influenced by earlier roadmaps [...] ideas embedded in institutions specify policy in the absence of innovation’ (Goldstein and Keohane 1993: 12-13).

Building on Weber’s insights about how bureaucracies produce and control social knowledge, Barnett and Finnemore (1999) argue that the roots of dysfunctional behaviour can stem from bureaucracies creating social knowledge by making generalised rules that define institutions that can make them unresponsive to their environments – in this case failing to move beyond Cold War mindsets and principles. The authors highlight that organisations are built on these rules and routines and are developed with particular beliefs and develop specific expertise which shape the way in which events are understood. They argue that:

Once in place, an organisation’s culture, understood as the rules, rituals and beliefs that are embedded in the organization (and its subunits), has important consequences for the way individuals who inhabit that organization make sense of the world (1999: 719).

As such, Barnett and Finnemore (2005: 162) argue, organisations can help to define the interests that states and other actors hold, particularly where they have liberal goals and are deemed to be desirable and legitimate. Looking at institutionalised ideas and expertise can thus support assessment of the influence of the Cold War on contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia and identify the importance of institutional issues that could constrain cognitive changes.

The second useful analytical perspective that Constructivism brings to the issue of state relations failing to adapt to new contexts is the need for clarity about self and external actors in order to inform policy. This can be useful for assessing US policies towards Russia that appear irrational. The duration and intensity of hostile US-Soviet relations during the Cold War provided a basis for behavioural certainty to develop and could further explain on-going Cold War cultures. This is especially so considering that actors did not foresee the end of the Cold War and so changes in state relations occurred quickly rather than incrementally and that post-Cold War US-Russian relations have been cyclical, with Russia failing to conform to many US expectations. This could create a reliance on entrenched ways of understanding the other in order to facilitate policy-making.

Building on the work of Anthony Giddens (1991), Mitzen (2006), Kinnvall (2004) and Steel (2008) use the concept of ontological security to make the case that states need to realise a sense of agency as when an actor does not know what to expect it becomes unclear how to pursue ends. Mitzen (2006) outlines that actors are motivated to create cognitive and behavioural certainty, which they do by establishing routines and practices. This serves to influence and sustain identity perceptions, even if it becomes attached to conflict and can thus sustain rivalries even if the environment changes. The relationship is regularised by routine which can also be programmed cognitively and so is often taken for granted and habitual. Although not a Constructivist, Kinnvall's study of how the globalisation of politics and economics can make actors ontologically insecure argues that nationalism can create powerful stories that restore a sense of stability and self which can subsequently inform policy by defining 'superior and inferior beings' (Kinnvall



2004: 763). Kinnvall's focus on nationalism is important considering the US interpretation of the Cold War's conclusion and confirmation of US exceptionalism and its role as world leader. It links with the wider assumption of some Constructivists that domestically driven national ideologies play a crucial role in identity (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001: 399). Steele (2008: 2-3) argues that states pursue their needs through social action to satisfy internal identity needs and maintain consistent self-concepts – this self being created and sustained through central narratives that produce routines in foreign policy. This can create policies that seem irrational yet make sense to the actor based on self-image. Such arguments connect to Hopf's (2010) analysis of the logic of habit, in which he argues that habits can sustain rivalries as habit eliminates uncertainty and can make sustained rivalry automatic. He argues that habits stemming from discourses of identity that are particularly dominant and widely shared within the state make it 'more unlikely habitual perceptions, attitudes, and practices will ever be challenged to the extent that necessary reflection will occur' (Hopf 2010: 555).

### **Sub-field Support**

Whilst Constructivism can provide a theoretical lens, scholars such as Hudson (2005: 4; 2014: 3-14) argue that for Constructivist analysis to be most effective it must be applied to a level of analysis with specific content and actors - a move beyond generalisations to a fuller account of state behaviour that includes the contributions of human beings. Hudson highlights the lack of attention to humans in International Relations, arguing that interactions across and between states are grounded in human decisions makers. FPA can redress this imbalance, she argues, by providing the tools for understanding how situations are defined and processed by human decision makers as well as highlighting domestic political constraints, the role of organisational processes and the characteristics and cognitions of individuals policy-makers (2005: 1-5). Hudson (2014: 4) outlines that while FPA traditionally analyses human decision-makers in positions of authority to commit the state's resources, it is possible to analyse those holding less directly influential positions. As noted, this analysis utilises both elected officials and other influential actors, such as analytical elites. This thesis builds on Hudson's approach, drawing on elements from

FPA to ground the Constructivist theory at the domestic level and to contribute to revealing the mechanisms behind post-Cold War US policy-makers' and analytical elites' ideas, understandings, expectations and attitudes.

Some scholars have attempted to fuse Constructivism with other International Relations theories and approaches, such as Barkin's (2003) Realist Constructivism. However, Constructivism can be especially effective when applied to FPA. Flanik (2011: 2) notes that while cognitive FPA and Constructivism individually operate on different levels of analysis, both have a subjectivist ontology where decision makers' reality is constructed and not subjectively given. Houghton (2007: 24-27) suggests that the need for dialogue between the two is equally important from an FPA perspective, arguing that FPA has been logically unconnected to the main International Relations theories but that combined they can provide greater explanatory power of how policy is made. As Houghton notes, each is strong where the other is weak. Constructivism makes no claim about specific content and cannot make explanations or predictions until coupled with a more robust understanding of who the 'relevant actors are, what they want, and what the content of the social structures might be' (Houghton 2007: 34). The remainder of the section outlines the specific elements of FPA that are most appropriate for the study of one state that draws heavily on the influence of history, noting their relevance for analysis of US-Russian relations.

### ***Institutionalised Practices and Assumptions***

As outlined, Constructivism highlights the issue of self-perpetuating cultures, a particularly important factor when analysing post-Cold War Russian relations in terms of entrenched Cold War understandings and influences. FPA can support analysis of this in four specific ways, helping to reveal how institutions influence policy-makers in the advice and options they provide as well as the implementation of policy – in essence providing the 'operational link' between ideas and foreign policy (Binnur 2005: 253). The first important element of this is institutional design because of the ways in which original purposes and inherent interests inhibit change.

One must be wary of being too deterministic with arguments about institutional design and path dependence but, as will be outlined, they have relevance to this case as many US foreign policy and defence institutions developed and expanded during the Cold War with imbedded ideas and assumptions about the Soviet Union. These included the CIA, Freedom House, NED and several CEE ethnic lobbies. Such an analysis can help to explain any cause to rely on fall-back understandings or to explain entrenched practices or thinking. Mabee (2011) argues that we should focus less on outputs and pay greater focus to institutional design, subsequent institutional pathways and the historical circumstances in which they were created. This is because they embed interests, options, knowledge and missions that may be difficult to overcome. He cites examples of how Pearl Harbour led to a new sense of the need for permanent preparedness and awareness of potential threats and that the passage of the National Security Act has to be seen in the context of anti-communism and suspicion of the Soviet Union. Pierson (2004: 1-4), similarly, argues that analysis of institutions must take place within a temporal context, because once initial outcomes are set they can become strongly reinforcing and developing different options can become difficult.

A second, related, factor identified by FPA is that initial parameters allow habits and specialist expertise to develop, which can contribute to entrench practices and assumptions and subsequently contribute to practices being formed and sustained even when the context changes. As the case studies will detail, many of the individuals and organisations designing, delivering or negotiating US policy and action towards Russia had the same role or mission as during the Cold War. Yee (2006) has suggested that ideas can become encased within institutions and policymakers become the bearers of ideas. He outlines that institutions facilitate the implementation of encased ideas by giving them organisational support and means of expression and these practices can then become embedded in terms of rules and procedures and thus continue to provide guiding principles and ways to act even after the interests of the creators have changed. Poulit (2008: 258) expands on these ideas, arguing that practices are rarely reasoned, but are the result of inarticulate, practical knowledge that makes required actions appear self evident. As Finnemore and Sikkink (2001: 402) note, groups with specialised knowledge carry shared

normative understandings that make them meaningful and agents of social constructions. This bureaucratic expertise can influence not only what information is provided but also the information that is requested by elected officials (Carpenter 2001).

FPA can also help to explain institutional policy towards Russia through its focus on bureaucratic interests, which Carlsnaes defines as ‘analyzing how people’s behaviour is moulded by the offices they hold’ (Carlsnaes 1992: 252). As noted, scholars such as Tsygankov (2009) have argued that some domestic US actors have sought to retain enemy images of Russia in order to advance other agendas, such as democracy promotion and expansion of US power. Considering the huge, and expanding, budgets involved in US defence and security during the Cold War and the original nature of the organisations’ missions in opposition to the USSR, this can add explanatory nuance to the ways in which different actors present situations and the policies they propose. FPA can provide insight into understanding the basis for the tactical use of Cold War narratives, such as expanding budgets or the benefits of seeming to be threatened by an ‘other’. Building on Weber’s arguments concerning the ways in which organisations put their own survival at the top of their priorities measured via other organisations influence and budget, bureaucratic politics highlight how organisations compete for resources and will guard the mission or purpose of that organisation (Hudson 2005: 8; for the classic study see: Allison 1971). FPA has sought to explain various US foreign policy decisions using the bureaucratic politics model, such as the decision to deploy a troop surge in Afghanistan in 2009 (Marsh 2014). This limits organisations flexibility to respond to changing contexts, particularly at the lower level of implementation.

The final way in which FPA can contribute to analysis of the relationship between institutions and ideational legacies is through identifying that the structure of institutions can act as a mechanism for allowing specific ideas to retain influence even if only held by a small number of individuals. As will be outlined, there was often difference in post-Cold War policy recommendations between regional Russia specialists and other foreign policy elites. As such, individual influence afforded

through institutional structures can be significant. Cottrell (2011) has argued that the US political system is too fractured to create cohesive foreign policy but that, at times, the institutional advantages of the Executive Office (which were greatly expanded during the Cold War), public opinion and American political culture make it vulnerable to extremism. Where there are competing policy ideas it may be that institutional structures can provide explanatory power in how one option was selected. This idea of the specifics of state and institutional structures is supported by Binnur (2005: 251), who criticises traditional approaches for their actor-general perspectives and notes that as state actions are political, decision makers are constrained not only by international systemic factors but also by domestic political conditions.

### ***Individuals***

Another area where FPA can support the explanatory power of Constructivism is by illuminating factors influencing individual decision-makers or analytical elites, such as their cultural backgrounds, personal histories, personality or generational factors. FPA could help explain this phenomenon, which could influence both stated and fall-back understandings. However, Hollis and Smith (1986: 283) have highlighted that actors can significantly change their positions whilst Jervis (2013) has argued that very different individuals still often make similar decisions because of systemic and external constraints. One must therefore be wary of overstating this factor and being excessively deterministic.

Still, individual backgrounds are especially relevant for this study for three reasons. Firstly, many influential foreign policy elites in the post-Cold War era forged their political careers and expertise during the Cold War. As Aslund and Kuchins point out, many contemporary high level US officials ‘grew up during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union was the big, bad enemy, and current Russian realities are still too often looked upon through Cold War blinders’ (Aslund and Kuchins 2009: 7). Scholars of US-Russian relations, such as Lieven (2000/2001) have suggested that in the post-Cold War era ‘residual elites’ have lacked the flexibility to adapt to a new

reality whilst Mankoff (2010) has addressed the issue of generation in post-Cold War US-Russian relations. As such personal history and generation could provide useful tools of analysis for identifying the factors behind actors' ideas and assumptions. Secondly, US-Russian relations are highly dependent on presidential summits and personal relations and so an individual's characteristics and ideas can have more importance than when relations between two states are highly linked through institutions. This was also the case during the Cold War, with analysts such as Matlock (2004) and Leffler (2007: 422), emphasising the importance of individuals in US-Soviet relations. Thirdly, in the highly altered context of the post-Cold War era it is relevant how flexible individual leaders were in assessing new information and realities as opposed to relying on existing ideas and agendas.

Richard Herrmann (1986) has highlighted that individuals can perceive the same external actor or situation differently beneath the general level or normative consensus, which can often mask important differences based on individual factors. His findings from an attitudinal survey covering a range of issues suggest that even when individuals are grouped by categories such as 'hawk' or 'dove', there are still differences across regions and issues and that definitions of particular situations can cut across general foreign policy orientations. This Herrmann suggests, can help to explain why his study 'finds an American elite badly divided on foreign policy' and suggests that legacies may be interpreted and prioritised differently dependent on individual backgrounds and perceptions (Herrmann 1986: 871; see also: Herrmann 1980). Such work builds on early studies on the role of individuals, such as Sprout and Sprout (1965), which, in exploring the 'psycho-milieu', argued that different individuals perceive their operational context differently. This can lead to gaps between perceived and real environments which subsequently influence policy choices that may not seem to be in the national interest to outside observers. Such findings resonate with the work of Jervis (1976), which argues that it is impossible to explain crucial foreign policy decisions without some reference to the decision-makers' ideas about the world and image of others. Margaret Herrmann's (2003) analysis of world leaders highlights that different facets of personality type influence how open different leaders are to incoming information as opposed to focusing on information that already fits their existing views or agenda (for further analysis of

the importance of personality on foreign policy see: Dyson 2006; Gallagher and Allen 2014). Hudson (2005: 10-14) has also highlighted the importance of individual characteristics and how information is processed by individual human agents. She highlights factors that may be important in an actor's interpretation of an event and subsequent response, such as core beliefs about the world, belief in the ability to change events, background, such as cultural heritage, as well as preferred means of pursuing goals. As Flanik phrases it, 'decision makers are prone to cognitive and affective biases' (2011: 14).

### *Narratives and Historical Memory*

US framings of post-Cold War relations have consistently used the Cold War as a reference point. Positive developments have been described as confirmation that the Cold War is over whilst tensions are often framed in terms of Cold War behaviours or a new Cold War. Such statements are anchored by understandings of history and correlating expectations for the future. This can be so both for entrenched Cold War understandings which may draw on historical narratives of Russian imperialism and stated expectations for the future based on the end of the Cold War, such as US values having universal application. FPA can support analysis of how ideational legacies are created and sustained through its focus on narratives and historical memory.

White (1980) highlights how every narrative is based on a set of events which might have been included but then have not been and that narratives are best understood as a way of speaking about events rather than as a representation. He builds on Hegel's observation about the intimate relationship between narratives and legitimacy and the appeal of historical discourse that is found in the extent to which it makes the real desirable. Bruner (1991) builds on this, presenting the case that cultural products mediate thought and influence representations of reality, and that an individual's working intelligence is never unaccompanied and can thus play a role in the construction of reality. Narratives, he suggests, serve the function of helping humans to understand and frame events around them and to provide legitimacy to certain

events and once told can come to form a tradition (or memory) and hold an influence. Once a narrative or historical memory influences how a state frames a situation or influences conceptions of self or other actors (such as type or role) then it may play a role in shaping future policy. As Yee (1996: 95-96) notes, discourses affect policy by supplying meaning to situations through their symbolic power and through their narration generate interpretive meaning which provide rules and instructions for the governing of behaviour. As such, narratives such as those outlined in Chapter Two, concerning US perceptions of the Cold War as (partly) a battle between good and evil which the US won, can influence subsequent policies towards, and expectations of, Russia.

### ***Decoding Information and Framing***

This chapter has emphasised the importance of assessing the ways in which actors frame situations, particularly in situations of uncertainty, and has highlighted how institutionalised ideas can influence the framing of situations and how information is decoded in a way that leads to self-perpetuating cultures and policies. Scholars such as Campbell (1998) have highlighted how the unfamiliar is often understood in terms of the familiar and is influenced by historic discourses. FPA can shed additional light on this, particularly in regards to analysis of Russia, where US actors have frequently made comparisons between Soviet and post-Cold War Russia and applied Cold War metaphors, stereotypes or analogies to understand relations with Russia or Russian actions. This links to the earlier point about decision makers being influenced by historical beliefs when faced with uncertainty, prompting a reliance on pre-existing beliefs.

Flanik (2011) argues that one way in which this happens is through actors using metaphors to understand situations but these metaphors, such as civilised state or rogue, must always be based on embodied concepts that reside in long-term memory. This cognition is often unconscious, Flanik argues, and as such conceptual metaphors map ‘directly grasped sources [...] onto abstract less well-understood targets’ in order to make new situations easily understood and as such contributes to



the ways in which actors frame situations (Flanik 2011: 6). Oppermann and Spencer, in an analysis of the use of salience and metaphor in the British experience of the Global War on Terror expand on the concept of metaphor use to enable actors to take shortcuts when framing issues and supporting actor understanding by ‘transferring knowledge from a familiar to an unfamiliar domain’ (Oppermann and Spencer 2013: 40). As is the case during debates on Russia, by using metaphors an actor frames ‘the target domain in a particular way and draw[s] attention to certain aspects of a phenomenon and invite[s] the listener or reader to think of one thing in the light of another’, thus limiting what seems possible or logical in policy terms (Oppermann and Spencer 2013: 45-46). Similarly, Hudson outlines that stereotypes and biases are shortcuts that help leaders decide on what information to focus on, and that the filters used to do this and the stereotypes applied ‘arise from a person’s larger experiences [...] We perceive what we expect to perceive’ (Hudson 2014: 43). Siniver and Collins (2015) examine the role of analogies in Israel’s decision-making in 2006 during the Second Lebanon War, arguing that the heavy use of dominant historical analogies produced a myopic approach by constraining consideration of alternative courses of action.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has set out a conceptual position, utilising Constructivism and FPA, to consider the ways in which ideational legacies influence policies. A definition of ideational legacy has been outlined, centred on stated understandings and expectations, entrenched understandings based on historical framings and experiences and, to a lesser degree, the functional use of Cold War narratives for tactical purposes. The ideational legacies will be applied to three broad categories of US political elites’ ideas regarding the international system, US identity and role and Russia’s identity and role. The analysis of the role of ideational legacies on the three case studies addressed in this thesis are based upon core Constructivist components, such as the social construction of identity, the importance of identity in influencing understandings of interests and the idea of self being partly formed through comparison with an ‘other’. Specific Constructivist elements focusing on historical experiences, private knowledge and self-perpetuating cultures are supplemented to

this in order to facilitate analysis of a single state. To locate this analysis on the domestic level the analysis incorporates specific elements from FPA. Particularly important for this research area are institutionalised ideas and assumptions, the role of individuals and domestic groups, historical narratives and memory and the decoding of incoming information. This approach will be used to analyse three case studies to support understandings of why particular policy decisions were made and how and why events involving the United States and Russia were framed in the post-Cold War era. Before conducting this analysis, the following chapter identifies key US policy-maker and institutional understandings and narratives of the Cold War and its end to identify the core ideas that can then be identified in the case study analysis.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Policy-maker Understandings of the Cold War

*'Recent history has shown how much ideas count.*

*The Cold War was, in its decisive aspect, a war of ideas'.*

(White House 1991a: 14)

#### Introduction

The previous chapter outlined that historically formed ideational factors, including private knowledge, entrenched attitudes and perceptions of identity and role can add explanatory power to analysis of foreign policy. To explore how Cold War ideational legacies have shaped contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia it is necessary to recognise US policy-makers' understandings and narratives of the Cold War from that era – specifically the nature of US-Soviet relations and expectations for the post-Cold War era based on interpretations of the Cold War's end. These understandings and expectations are key Cold War influences that combine to form the ideational legacies that shape policy. There are two primary reasons why these narratives and expectations are important in understanding post-Cold War policies. The first is their influence on contemporary perceptions of Russia, the United States and the international system. Understandings can influence not only stated expectations but also shape entrenched mindsets and reliance on fall-back positions in times of uncertainty. Secondly, as outlined, they partly shape post-Cold War policy options by influencing what policies appear logical as well as limiting policy options if the United States is to be consistent with the image it presents, and understands, of itself.

Of course, there were a wide array of understandings and it would be unrealistic to expect to find consensus amongst policy-makers on what the Cold War constituted. Mayers (1988: 114-119) highlights that many within foreign policy circles, including Walter Lippmann, were critical of Kennan's (1947) 'Sources of Soviet Conduct' *Foreign Affairs* article. Nelson (1994: 2-3) details that there was initially significant opposition to the principles expressed in NSC 68. Mann (2009: 307-315) chronicles

the differing perceptions that Reagan and, then Vice-President, Bush had of Gorbachev and the appropriate approach to employ towards the USSR. Leffler (2005: 29) notes that in July 1947 some US intelligence analysts in the War Department argued that the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan provoked a more aggressive Soviet attitude. However, by focusing on the highest level of state articulations and most significant policy and planning documents, it is possible to identify a set of understandings that appear to have had consistency across the Cold War. These, crucially, formed long-term narratives and framings within US political culture and bureaucracies. As Campbell has described, foreign policy is a practice, 'central to the constitution, production, and maintenance of American political identity' (Campbell 1998: 8). This is especially so when self-identity is, as addressed earlier, defined against an 'Other', as it was during the Cold War.

To identify core understandings the chapter traces the speeches and policies of key policy-makers, primarily presidents, to identify central themes. This chapter is not attempting to provide a definitive explanation of the Cold War and it does not dismiss the importance of material factors and issues of relative power, as scholars such as Wohlforth (1994) and Cesa (2009) suggest. As Melvyn P. Leffler has put it, the 'Cold War will defy any single master narrative' (Leffler 1999: 502). Neither is the chapter seeking to analyse literature concerning US Cold War motivations or the nature of the Cold War (for overviews see, Gaddis 1997; Leffler and Westad 2010; Harper 2011). Rather, it is a thick description of the dominant framings, discourses and ideas of the highest-ranking policy-makers throughout the Cold War, identifying central themes across political discourse and key government documents. The understandings outlined are not the only discourses from the Cold War era but they were powerful ones that, despite fluctuating in their intensity across the Cold War, lasted the duration of the conflict.

In identifying actor understandings and framings, the chapter addresses ideas that had the potential to shape post-Cold War policies towards Russia and can be used to compare framings between US-Soviet and US-Russian relations. The use of speeches is important for three reasons. Firstly, as outlined earlier, presidential

speeches are the highest spoken articulations of the US position. Secondly, they often form the basis of long-lasting historical narratives and can perpetuate and reinforce specific ideas about identity (Jervis 2010). Finally, as scholars such as Krebs (2010: 23) highlight, public narratives and stated positions can shape or limit later policy options if actors are to retain legitimacy. The memos, policy recommendations and arguments of key presidential advisors and senior officials are also used to illuminate core ideas within government. Particular focus will be afforded to early Cold War documents, such as Kennan's Long Telegram from February 1946 and NSC 68, produced in 1950. This focus on early documents reflects their influence on forming the basis of long-standing doctrines and having lasting influence on understandings of the Cold War (Hixton 1989; Fakiolas 1997: 415; May 1993: vii; Fautua 1997: 95; Del Pero 2003: 72; Harper 2011: 94; Matlock 2010: 7&15). Despite not being an official government document, the analysis includes Kennan's 1947 *Foreign Affairs* article as it was based on a memorandum to Forrestal and soon after writing it Kennan joined the Policy Planning Staff (Mayers 1988:113). There is no detailed focus on the specific actions and policies that these understandings informed, such as intervention in Vietnam, arms control agreements or the creation of NATO.

The time period under focus is 1946 until the end of the George H. W. Bush administration in 1993. Categorisation of the beginning and conclusion of the Cold War is a point of scholarly debate and, as Harper (2011: 243) suggests, may never be settled. Nevertheless, the time period selected allows analysis over the period of the most commonly recognised starting points, such as the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and Berlin Crisis, through to the end of the final Cold War administration (Ambrose and Brinkley 1997; Leffler and Painter 2005; Harper 2011: 64-65&75: Leffler 1992). The early and final Cold War years are especially important periods for identifying the initial ideas that formed foundational Cold War understandings and highlight those which were consistent across the Cold War and influenced perceptions of its conclusion. Expressed understandings during periods of high tension also demand attention as policy-makers were often required to be more explicit regarding their views on the Cold War and US-Soviet relations.

The chapter is organised into three sections. The first section outlines what is meant by ‘Cold War influences’ and provides an overview of what these are and how they will be used throughout the thesis. The following sections then explore the most over-arching Cold War influences in detail. The second section details six thematic policy-maker understandings of the Cold War. It suggests that at the centre of Cold War understandings, for many policy-makers, were perceptions of fundamental systemic differences between the Soviet Union and the ‘West’ generally and United States specifically, centred on conceptions of ideology, values, morality and economic systems.<sup>2</sup> These differences, which dictated perceptions of identity, translated into three core understandings of US-Soviet relations and their roles and relationship in the Cold War, based on competition, the perception of threat and the need for cooperation in some policy areas for mutual security. These elements were mutually reinforcing and formed powerful Cold War narratives. The final section details how these understandings influenced five specific interpretations of the Cold War’s end and assumptions about the post-Cold War era based on ideas of US and Russian identity and the nature of the international system. These understandings and expectations are key Cold War influences that can be identified across the later contemporary case studies in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

### **Cold War Influences**

Before addressing core policy-maker Cold War understandings it is important to outline what is meant by Cold War influences and how these differ from ideational legacies. Cold War influences are individual ideas, understandings or experiences developed during the Cold War or through interpretation of its conclusion. Cold War influences are primarily cognitive but a small number also address organisational issues, such as institutional origins. These Cold War influences combine to form the ideational legacies that shape policy (all Cold War ideational legacies addressed in this thesis have a minimum of three Cold War influences). Some of the Cold War

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<sup>2</sup> Although the ‘West’ is a problematic term in the post-Cold War context, it was frequently used during the Cold War and it used here to indicate the US-led bloc within the bi-polar structure of the Cold War – primarily associated with North America and Western Europe.

influences are over-arching and have relevance across a variety of policies and cases, such as democracy being recognised as the final and only legitimate form of government, whilst other influences are case specific, such as ideas about how arms control treaties should be constructed. Across the thesis thirty-two Cold War influences will be outlined. These Cold War influences combine in different, often conflicting, ways to underpin the eight Cold War ideational legacies that sit at the centre of the thesis.

The over-arching Cold War influences will be outlined in detail in this chapter. The remaining, case specific, Cold War influences are addressed within the case study chapters as appropriate. Table One, below, lists all thirty-two Cold War influences, including: stated expectations for the post-Cold War era based on interpretations of the Cold War's end; entrenched ideas, mind-sets and framings for US-Soviet and US-Russian relations; and specific practices that developed during the Cold War that have persistent influence stemming from institutional expertise and mission origins. The impacts of these Cold War influences on the specific ideational legacies are addressed across the thesis. Different influences have differing resonance with specific domestic groups and are more relied upon in different contexts. However, each has played a role in US foreign policy towards Russia in the post-Cold War era.

**Table One: Cold War Influences**

<b>Cold War Influences: US Understandings, Expectations and Practices</b>		
<b>United States</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>International system</b>
The United States won the Cold War	The USSR lost the Cold War	States around the globe moving towards democracy and US values
United States a unique state – US global leadership legitimate and necessary	Soviet Union partly built on existing Russian imperialism	Nuclear weapons a principle threat of the post-Cold War era
Democracy critical to US security	Russia will move towards a democratic model and support Western agendas	Breakaway of the Soviet satellite states meant they would towards the West
United States played an important role in the liberation of CEE – special obligation to the region	Russia cannot be trusted to comply with arms control agreements – need to verify	Central and Eastern Europe has a particularly strong democratic trajectory
The United States cannot return to isolationism	US needs to promote democracy in the post-Soviet space	NATO a mechanism to promote and defend democracy
US has vital interests in Europe (including CEE)	Public criticism of the Russian system as a means to encourage change	NATO is a mechanism for Russian containment
US superior to Russia	US-Russian relations, and Russian actions, primarily defined by ideology	NATO a mechanism for US influence / leadership in Europe
NMD critical to defending US interests – including from Russian aggression	There is a need to contain Russian expansionism	Cold War era concepts of nuclear arms control remain relevant
US and Russian differences based on competing values and ideas	Relations based on zero-sum competition	United States needs to cooperate with Russia on nuclear security
US-Russian relations have ethical dynamic – US ‘good’ vs. Russia ‘bad’	NMD a critical factor in ending the Cold War and forcing Russian behaviour change	The end of the Cold War marked the geopolitical unification of Europe
	Russia cannot be trusted	US history of promoting change in states surrounding Russia



## **Policy-maker Understandings of the Cold War**

### ***Understanding 1 – Irreconcilable Political Systems and Values: US Democracy and Freedom vs. Soviet Tyranny and Repression***

There is a substantial literature addressing the importance of ideology and competing systems in the Cold War (Mueller 1993; MacDonald 1996; Gaddis 1997; Kramer 1999; Engerman 2010) and the centrality of different political systems and values was a clear feature in US policy-makers' stated understandings of the Cold War. A dominant narrative was that at the core of US-Soviet relations was a tension between US democracy and an inferior socialist Soviet political system - the two having incompatible aims. The idea of political difference was especially important because US planners assumed that Soviet leaders understood socialism as a universal ideology, whilst US leaders also viewed democracy as having universal application (Harper 2011: 26-27). As Kramer (1999: 554-555), Ikenberry (2000) and Maier (2010) note, open-markets and economic liberalism were also a feature of the freedom and system that many policy-makers saw themselves as defending and a component of the systemic struggle. There was strong discourse that the two systems were built on fundamentally different values – the freedom, human rights and liberty of the West and the slavery and repression of the USSR. US framings conform to Latham's assessment that 'the Cold War was a fundamentally ideological conflict, a struggle over the direction of global history and the definition of modernity itself' (Latham 2010: 259). While ideology and values were at the core of this understanding there was also a uniquely national aspect, with the Russian character featuring in assessments of the USSR and its presumed imperial ambitions.

This understanding of fundamental political difference was clear in early Cold War documents and policies. Kennan's Long Telegram in February 1946 outlined that the two systems could not purposefully co-exist. Kennan (1946) based this primarily on the assumption that Soviet leaders were striving for expansion, based on his reading that Soviet leaders viewed socialism and democracy as incompatible and that the Soviet Union was in perpetual war with capitalist states. Kennan summarised these concerns when arguing that:

We have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with US there can be no permanent *modus vivendi* that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure (Kennan 1946).

Other influential reports and documents from the early Cold War era reflected these themes. In response to a request by Truman in 1946, Clark Clifford, Special Counsel to Truman between 1946 and 1950, produced a review of American-Soviet relations. Although the report was more hopeful about coexistence, it also suggested that communist philosophy meant that Soviet leaders believed that peaceful coexistence between capitalist and communist states to be impossible and that the United States should support democratic states in danger of Soviet aggression (Clifford 1946: 3-4&75-76). Kramer (1999: 554) suggests that the Soviet decision not to ratify the Bretton Woods agreements marked a key turning point in the Cold War and policy-makers referenced the threat of economic difference within wider discussions of systemic competition. An article published by Kennan anonymously in *Foreign Affairs*, in 1947, described the 'political personality of Soviet power' as the 'product of ideology and circumstance' (Kennan 1947: 566). The article also referenced economic difference, arguing that Soviet leaders would 'stress the menace of capitalism' to justify their policies, partly based on the view that capitalism and socialism were antagonistic (Kennan 1947: 570).

Produced in April 1950, NSC 68 focused to an even greater extent on the irreconcilability of the two systems and values, arguing that the gravest threat to the United States stemmed from aggressive Soviet designs and 'the nature of the Soviet system' (National Security Council 1950). The universal nature of both systems was an important feature, with the report suggesting that at the ideological level 'the conflict is worldwide', with Soviet leaders portrayed as viewing their system as 'a new universal faith' (National Security Council 1950). US political values were framed in the same terms, the report arguing that 'the values by which we live hold

promise for a dynamic manifestation to the rest of the world of the vitality of our system' (National Security Council 1950). The document described the Cold War as a battle between the 'idea of slavery under the grim oligarchy of the Kremlin' and the 'idea of freedom' and argued that the:

Purpose of the slave state to eliminate the challenge of freedom has placed the two great powers at opposite poles. It is this fact which gives the present polarization of power the quality of crisis [...] no other value system is so wholly irreconcilable with ours (National Security Council 1950).

The Truman Doctrine, first publicly articulated in detail in March 1947 and which became a central plank for US Cold War policy, reinforced these assumptions. Although not explicitly mentioning the USSR, Truman strongly emphasised the global and irreconcilable nature of the ideological conflict and its underlying values when declaring that almost all states:

Must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms (Truman 1947b).

Truman was consistent with this theme of absolute political and normative difference. In 1949 he argued that the:

United States and other like-minded nations find themselves directly opposed by a regime with contrary aims and a totally different concept of life [...] the actions resulting from the Communist philosophy are a threat to the efforts of free nations to bring about world recovery and lasting peace (Truman 1949a).

Truman's farewell address in 1953 captured the centrality of values in early understandings of the Cold War:

I have had hardly a day in office that has not been dominated by this all-embracing struggle – this conflict between those who love freedom and those who would lead the world back into slavery and darkness (Truman 1953).

The framing of systemic difference and opposing values formed a central US narrative across the Cold War. In his 1953 Annual Message to Congress Eisenhower argued that US 'values and virtues applies with equal force at the ends of the earth and in relations with our neighbour next door' and that US policy would subsequently defend freedom across the world and not acquiesce to 'enslavement' (Eisenhower 1953b). The Eisenhower Doctrine outlined that in its competition with the USSR, the United States desired 'a world environment of freedom, not servitude' (Eisenhower 1957a). Interviewed in 1965, William Averell Harriman, US Ambassador to the Soviet Union between 1943 and 1946 and Under Secretary for Political Affairs between 1963 and 1965, reflected that despite having limited experience in dealing with the USSR prior to his election as president, Kennedy clearly, 'recognized the basic and fundamental difference between us – their desire to communize the world, and our desire to frustrate them in those designs' (Harriman 1965: 37).

Discussing US involvement in Vietnam, Johnson argued that 'we fight for values and we fight for principles, rather than territories or colonies' (Johnson 1965b).

Even during detente, which some scholars suggest remained within the traditional constraints of Cold War thinking (Garthoff 1994; Lefeber 2008), the theme of irreconcilable difference between political systems and values remained. Nixon outlined to Congress in early 1971 that the United States and USSR had improved cooperation on a number of issues, such as early steps towards cooperation in space, and pointed to signs of hope for the future. However, he emphasised that despite mutual interests US-Soviet differences 'are not matters of mood, they are matters of substance' (Nixon 1971). He reinforced this message the following year, warning Congress that despite the upturn in relations, 'we must remember that Soviet ideology still proclaims hostility to some of America's most basic values' (Nixon 1972). In 1975 Ford reported to Congress that despite US-Soviet relations moving towards greater stability and reduced tensions, the United States recognised that it was 'dealing with a nation that reflects different principles' and that there 'should be no illusions about the nature of the Soviet system' (Ford 1975).

The centrality of values was particularly apparent during the final Cold War years. Matlock suggests that Reagan understood that 'the Cold War was ultimately about ideology' (Matlock 2004: 320). The Reagan Doctrine, articulated in 1982, described the Cold War as 'a competition of ideas and values' and asserted that:

The ultimate determinant in the struggle that's now going on in the world will not be bombs and rockets, but a test of wills and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated (Reagan 1982).

This position on ideology was still clear in 1985, despite improvement in relations between Gorbachev and Reagan. Reagan outlined before the UN that the:

Differences between America and the Soviet Union are deep and abiding. The United States is a democratic nation [...] It's difficult

for us to understand the ideological premise that force is an acceptable way to expand a political system. We Americans do not accept that any government has the right to command and order the lives of its people, that any nation has an historic right to use force to export its ideology. This belief, regarding the nature of man and the limitations of government, is at the core of our deep and abiding differences with the Soviet Union, differences that put us into natural conflict and competition with one another (Reagan 1985b).

A month later, despite informing Congress that there was an improved understanding between the two states, Reagan again warned that ‘the United States cannot afford illusions about the nature of the USSR. We cannot assume that their ideology and purpose will change; this implies enduring competition’ (Reagan 1985c).

Brown (2010: 262) argues that the development of political pluralism in the USSR, freedom of speech and contested elections meant that by 1989 the Cold War, as a battle of competing systems, was over. Similarly, Risse-Kapen argues that the West viewed Soviet values as utterly opposed to their own but that the:

Democratization of the Soviet system initiated by Michail Gorbachev and continued by Boris Yeltsin then started ending the Cold War in Western eyes by altering the “Otherness” of the Soviet system. (Risse-Kapen 1996: 395).

Only when Gorbachev’s ‘new thinking’ persuaded Reagan that the Soviet political system and values were changing was the US-Soviet relationship able to evolve (Jervis 2001: 60; Brown 2010: 262; Matlock 2010: 57). Indeed, Reagan’s Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, suggests that ‘psychologically and ideologically, the Cold War was over before Ronald Reagan moved out of the White House’ (Matlock 2004: 312). In June 1987 Reagan assessed that the Soviet Union

could be 'in a limited way, be coming to understand the importance of freedom' (Reagan 1987a) and later that year stated that:

We can have real cooperation in resolving regional conflicts on terms that promote peace and freedom. This is essential to a lasting improvement in our relations (Reagan 1987b).

In February 1989, in a memo requesting a review paper on US-Soviet relations, Bush suggested that US policy had been 'vindicated, as the people of the world reject the outmoded dogma of Marxism-Leninism in search for prosperity and freedom' (Bush 1989a). Publicly Bush praised Gorbachev's changes but warned that relations could not fundamentally change until 'a lasting political pluralism and respect for human rights' had been achieved (Bush 1989a). Emphasising that ideology was at the core of the Cold War, Bush went on to declare that:

We are approaching the conclusion of an historic postwar struggle between two visions: one of tyranny and conflict and one of democracy and freedom [...] as the Soviet Union itself moves toward greater openness and democratization, as they meet the challenge of responsible international behavior, we will match their steps with steps of our own. Ultimately, our objective is to welcome the Soviet Union back into the world order. (Bush 1989a).

When those changes took place Bush's position moved closer to Reagan's. Indeed, Fischer (2010:281-282) notes that both Reagan and Bush stressed in public and private meetings that they wanted Gorbachev's reforms to succeed. As Bush outlined at a joint question-and-answer session with Gorbachev, held following their Malta summit in December 1989:

For 40 years, the Western alliance has stood together in the cause of freedom. And now, with reform underway in the Soviet Union, we stand at the threshold of a brand-new era of US-Soviet relations (Bush and Gorbachev 1989).

However, not until Gorbachev signed the *Charter of Paris for a New Europe* in 1990, which expressed a 'steadfast commitment to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms; prosperity through economic liberty and social justice' (CSCE 1990) did Bush declare the Cold War over. Changes in Soviet behaviours led to Bush declaring that 'we will work together' and that 'President Gorbachev has been a good partner in peace' (Bush 1990a). In October 1990 Bush was able to declare that the 'US-Soviet relationship is finally beyond containment and confrontation' (Bush 1990b). As the 1991 *National Security Strategy* suggested, the 'reduced role of ideology in Soviet foreign policy has diminished the importance of many developing areas as arenas of conflict with the West' and allowed for increased cooperation (White House, 1991: 5). In large part this was because of Soviet reforms which brought the USSR closer to US values and political principles. As Bush reflected in 1992, 'Glasnost, perestroika: They may have been Russian words, but the concepts at their core were universal' (Bush 1992b). Indeed, Lo suggests that Yeltsin's initial popularity in the West was based on the perception that he was 'overcoming a tyrannical system' (Lo 2003: 99).

An important point to add is that although ideology and values were understood to be at the core of the Cold War relationship, the Soviet political system and its values were considered to have also been partly informed by the Russian character. As Leffler (1984: 365) suggests, in the early Cold War consideration of Russia's historical ambitions featured in US policy planning alongside issues of ideology and strategic need. Kennan suggested that Soviet socialism was uniquely Russian and fuelled by an instinctive Russian sense of insecurity, partly informed by contact with the more powerful and competent West, and that Soviet goals were 'borne along by deep and powerful currents of Russian nationalism' (Kennan 1946). This did not supersede ideological concerns but did introduce a uniquely national element to



understandings of the Soviet threat. The document placed considerable emphasis on Russian history and referred to Russian-American relations rather than Soviet-American relations. Kennan reinforced these arguments in his *Foreign Affairs* article. He argued that the cautious and flexible pursuit of communist goals would be 'fortified by the lessons of Russian history' and the Russian 'mind', warned that Russian leaders are 'keen judges of human psychology, and [...] are quick to exploit such evidences of weakness' and suggested that the Soviet view that the outside world is hostile would be sustained 'by the powerful hands of Russian history and tradition' (Kennan 1947: 855&861-862). NSC 68 described the Kremlin as 'inescapably militant' in part because 'it is the inheritor of Russian imperialism' and attributed the Soviet doctrine of seeking maximum results with minimum risk as a 'new form of expression for traditional Russian caution' (National Security Council 1950). Similarly, as Hopf (1998: 175) notes, Eastern European states also often understood the Soviet Union as Russia, which further contributed to the conflation of the USSR and Russia.

It is clear from public discourse that the Russian national character remained a feature of discussions of the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War. In January 1950 Secretary of State Dean Acheson argued that Russian interests in Asia long outdated the Soviet position but that communism 'has added new methods, new skills and new concepts to the thrust of Russian imperialism' (Acheson 1950). In his State of the Union address in 1951 Truman spoke not only of 'Soviet imperialists' but also more specifically about Soviet Russia's desire for world conquest and warned of 'the Russian Communist dictatorship [that aims] to take over the world, step by step' (Truman 1951a). Eisenhower, likewise, suggested that historical Russian imperialism made Soviet communism especially dangerous, arguing that:

Russia's rulers have long sought to dominate the Middle East. That was true of the Czars and it is true of the Bolsheviks [...] The Middle East, which has always been coveted by Russia, would today be prized more than ever by International Communism (Eisenhower 1957a).

Charles E. Bohlen (1964: 7), Secretary of State for Soviet Affairs between 1960 and 1962, reflected in 1964 on the subtleties of the Russian application of communism. Reagan showed a particularly strong interest in the Russian character and requested that Jack Matlock prepare a 'Russia 101' course for him so that he could better understand Russia. Matlock prepared several sessions for Reagan, covering issues that included Russian history and culture (Matlock 2015).

Indeed, this national element occasionally appeared to supersede the ideological aspects of the relationship for a small number of foreign policy elites. For instance, Congresswomen Frances P. Bolton argued against Kennedy's plans to sell wheat to the USSR. Theodore C. Sorensen, Special Counsel to the President between 1961-1964, suggested that she left the impression on Kennedy's staff that 'she felt the Russians were our enemy in the Cold War, and we should not be sending them anything' (Sorensen 1964: 89). Tsygankov argues that for several important influential groups, such as the Committee on the Present Danger' and 'Team B' 'their real target was Russia, not the communist regime' (Tsygankov 2009b). It becomes clear from tracing the speeches of policy-makers and core government documents that perceptions of systemic difference between the United States and Soviet Union (often interchanged with Russia) was a consistent narrative across the Cold War, both in political discourse and government planning and policy documents.

### ***Understanding 2 – Morality: Good vs. Evil***

There are competing literatures concerning US morality in the Cold War (for overviews see, Gaddis 1983; MacDonald 1996; Harper 2011:83-89). Scholars such as Smith (2012) argue that US policy during the Cold War was significantly motivated by an underlying morality. However, there is also a body of literature that suggests that US Cold War foreign policy was motivated primarily by economic interests or to increase US power, and that the United States was responsible for much of the Cold War conflict (Kolko 1988; Bibeaux 1999; Lens 2003; Lafeber

2008). Other analyses highlight a mix of ideals and traditional interests involved in US decision making (Ikenberry 2000). Many US actors at the time also focused on the moral dynamic of the Cold War and this formed the second central understanding of the Cold War - that the Cold War was about morality, at its simplest a battle between good and evil. As Lundestad (1989: 527) has observed, traditional US perceptions of exceptionalism combined with a narrative of moralism during the Cold War.

As well as being evident in presidential rhetoric, this moral element was clear in early key foreign policy documents. Kennan asserted that in, 'the name of Marxism they sacrificed every single ethical value in their methods and tactics' (Kennan 1946). NSC 20/4 outlined the potential danger of not exposing 'the fallacies and evil of communism' (National Security Council 1948). NSC 68 described Soviet doctrine as one that 'rejects moral considerations' and Soviet policy as being 'utterly amoral', meaning that, unlike the United States, Soviet leaders would only resist from employing violence as a matter of expediency (National Security Council 1950). US morality was portrayed as the polar opposite to the lack of Soviet ethics. NSC 68 framed US policy as having a clear 'moral and political direction' and 'moral strength' with the freedoms that this provided offering opportunities for 'the Kremlin to do its evil work' (National Security Council 1950). Indeed, in referencing morality, the document outlined that, 'none of those [US] scruples deter those whose only code is, "morality is that which serves the revolution"' (National Security Council 1950).

In January 1953 Eisenhower, describing America's experiences and role in the world, argued that the 'forces of good and evil are massed and armed and opposed as rarely before in history [...] freedom is pitted against slavery; lightness against the dark' (Eisenhower 1953a). Eisenhower regularly reinforced this narrative. In January 1957 he argued that 'Soviet rulers continue to show that they do not scruple to use any means to gain their ends', whereas the USSR had 'nothing whatsoever to fear from the United States' unless the USSR resorted to aggression first (Eisenhower 1957a). Later that month he argued that great powers, strongly implying the USSR,

had the power to bring ‘evil to the free world’s future’ and suggested that international communism was ‘dark in purpose’, comparing this to the United States which aspired to build ‘a peace with justice in a world where moral law prevails’ (Eisenhower 1957b). In 1963, when discussing commonalities between US and Soviet citizens, Kennedy referenced the immoral nature of the Soviet system, arguing that, ‘no government or social system is so evil that its people must be considered as lacking in virtue’ (Kennedy 1963: 288). This was in contrast with his framing of the United States, when referring to, ‘our right to the moral leadership of this planet’ (Lundestad 1989: 527). Johnson framed US involvement in Vietnam partly as a moral endeavour, required to address immoral Soviet practices, arguing that:

It is the arena where Communist expansionism is most aggressively at work in the world today—where it is crossing international frontiers in violation of international agreements; where it is killing and kidnapping; where it is ruthlessly attempting to bend free people to its will. Into this mixture of subversion and war, of terror and hope, America has entered—with its material power and with its moral commitment (Johnson 1967).

Even during the relatively low-tension years of detente Nixon emphasised the importance of morality in defining US-Soviet relations and achieving global freedom, arguing that:

Any hope of peace and freedom will be determined by whether the American people have the moral stamina and the courage to meet the challenge of free world leadership. Let historians not record that when America was the most powerful nation in the world we passed on the other side of the road and allowed the last hopes for peace and freedom of millions of people to be suffocated by the forces of totalitarianism (Nixon 1969).

Carter framed US relations with other states within the Cold War dynamic and suggested that the relationships were influenced by moral considerations, unlike the Soviet Union. Carter argued that:

Our moral sense dictates a clear-cut preference for these societies which share with us an abiding respect for individual human rights. We do not seek to intimidate, but it is clear that a world which others can dominate with impunity would be inhospitable to decency and a threat to the well-being of all people (Carter 1977).

Morality remained strongly pronounced during the final Cold War years. In 1983, at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals, Reagan famously framed the Cold War as a moral struggle, urging the audience not to:

Ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil [...] The real crisis we face today is a spiritual one; at root, it is a test of moral will and faith (Reagan 1983a).

While such phrasing was likely influenced by the audience Reagan was addressing, he made the same point when addressing broader audiences. Following the Soviet Union shooting down a civilian Korean airliner in September 1983 Reagan argued that:

This was the Soviet Union against the world and the moral precepts which guide human relations among people everywhere. It was an act of barbarism, born of a society which wantonly

disregards individual rights and the value of human life and seeks constantly to expand and dominate other nations (Reagan 1983d).

When criticising Soviet human rights abuses, Reagan, in an address to the nation in January 1984, again emphasised the moral element of the US-Soviet relationship, stating that ‘moral considerations alone compel us to express our deep concern over prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union’ (Reagan 1984). In May 1985 Reagan told European officials that Western Europe’s rejection of communism and embrace of democracy was ‘a moral triumph’ (Reagan 1985a). In December 1987, he described US ‘moral opposition’ to an ideology that justifies Soviet expansionism and human rights violations (Reagan 1987b). US morality and Soviet immorality was thus a key way in which the Cold War relationship was framed and respective identities understood. The idea of the United States as morally superior was a consistent feature of Cold War narratives.

### ***Understanding 3 – Mistrust: Open and Benign vs. Deceitful and Secretive***

That mistrust formed an important feature of the Cold War is commonly accepted (Larson 1997b). From the perspective of many US policy-makers this stemmed from the understanding that the Soviet Union was secretive and deceitful in contrast to US openness and trustworthiness (Leffler 1992: 3). Soviet secrecy was understood as a cause of international tension, particularly so because of perceptions of Soviet imperial designs. In consequence, US leaders could not trust Soviet leaders and feared secret Soviet intentions, often assuming, and planning for, the worst-case scenario. Matlock (2010: 30) suggests that Soviet secrecy was partly to disguise weakness but the result was to raise US suspicions. As Rowley and Weldes highlight, a dominant theme of presidential speeches was:

A communist conspiracy based on betrayal and deception (Kennedy), undertaken by an enemy who violates agreements and whose claims are false (Johnson, Carter), whose methods are

ruthless and insidious (Eisenhower), and whose aims are subversion, infiltration, and world conquest (Truman, Johnson, Nixon) (Rowley and Weldes 2008: 199).

Roosevelt had initially been optimistic of post-war cooperation but in March 1945 commented that 'we can't do business with Stalin. He has broken every one of the promises he made at Yalta' (Gaddis 1989: 30). Kennan's Long Telegram highlighted not only perceptions of Soviet untrustworthiness but also the assumed danger of their secretive nature, suggesting that the United States should expect, 'continued secretiveness about internal matters, designed to conceal weaknesses and to keep opponents in dark' (Kennan 1946). Clifford's (1946) report to Truman listed Soviet violations of agreements with the United States, many described as concerning matters of vital US interest. The lack of trust in the USSR was particularly important as Clifford, demonstrating worst-case scenario assumptions, advising that the Soviet Union could embark on armed expansion at any time. Kennan's (1947: 572) *Foreign Affairs* article warned that appearances of Soviet sincerity could not be trusted and any agreements should be considered as tactical on the Soviet part.

As Jeffreys-Jones highlights, CIA assessments of Soviet foreign policy in the mid to late 1940s warned of Soviet opportunism, assessing that the Soviet Union would be 'devious as well as diplomatic' in its efforts to undermine the West (Jeffreys-Jones: 23-24). Indeed, he notes that such was the CIA's mistrust that Gorbachev's policies were assessed as 'just another Soviet attempt to deceive us' (Jeffreys-Jones 1997: 23-24). NSC 68 described the risks of competing with a regime 'acting in secrecy and with speed', including the fear of attack (National Security Council 1950). NSC 162/2 warned that Soviet 'peace gestures' could likely stem from deceptive designs to divide the West by inflating false hopes rather than from any genuine motivation (National Security Council 1953: 2).

This fear was particularly apparent during periods of high tension. Following Khrushchev's demand in November 1958 that the United States, United Kingdom

and France pull their forces out of West Berlin, Eisenhower portrayed the USSR as repudiating previous agreements and fundamentally untrustworthy, arguing that they lived by 'the Communist formula' that 'promises are like pie crusts, made to be broken' (Eisenhower 1959). This framing of the Soviet Union was reinforced the following year following the Soviet downing of a US U-2 Spy Plane in May 1960. Eisenhower subsequently described Soviet secrecy as a threat to the free world, arguing that in 'most of the world no large-scale attack could be prepared in secret, but in the Soviet Union there is a fetish of secrecy and concealment' (Eisenhower 1960).

Kennedy (1961d) maintained this theme, accusing the USSR in 1961 of attempting to deceive the world about the nature of, and threats stemming, from Berlin. The following year Kennedy (1962a) justified the US decision to be in a position to test nuclear weapons in the atmosphere in the context of Soviet secrecy. He argued that there was a need to introduce methods of control and inspection that would protect the United States 'against a repetition of prolonged secret preparations for a sudden series of major tests' by the USSR (Kennedy 1962a). The theme of openness versus secrecy and subsequent mistrust was particularly apparent during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Kennedy framed the USSR as secretive and deceitful which, based on their presumed imperial designs and material capacity, was understood as a grave threat to the free world. Kennedy argued in October 1962 that the United States could not tolerate the Soviet Union's 'deliberate deception' and explicitly compared USSR secretiveness with the open nature of the United States, arguing that:

Our own strategic missiles have never been transferred to the territory of any other nation under a cloak of secrecy and deception; and our history--unlike that of the Soviets since the end of World War II--demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or conquer any other nation or impose our system upon its people (Kennedy 1962b).



Distrust and fear of Soviet secrecy was apparent in US planning for the terms of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Indeed, Lord Harlech (1965), UK Ambassador to the United States between 1961 and 1965, recalled that in his discussions with Kennedy regarding the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Kennedy expressed his desire to visit the Soviet Union in order to improve relations because, as Harlech argues, ‘it was very hard to reach hard agreements when the atmosphere of distrust was so intense’ (Harlech 1965: 24).

Other policy-makers often made similar statements regarding their lack of trust of Soviet leaders. In 1988 Kissinger praised Nixon’s handling of the Soviet Union, in part based on the fact that, despite changes in relations, he ‘was not about to trust the Russians’ (Kissinger 1988). Presidential candidate Walter Mondale’s blunt assessment during a debate with Reagan that ‘I don’t trust the Russians’ reflects this strain of feeling throughout much of the Cold War (Mondale 1984). Matlock recalls that during Reagan’s first press conference as president, when asked about detente, he responded that ‘these are people that will lie and cheat as part of their philosophy’ that that US leaders had to remember that even during more hopeful periods (Matlock 2015). Reagan accused Soviet leaders of lying about world events and of cheating on arms agreements. Following the Soviet downing of a Korean airliner in September 1983 Reagan told Americans that the Soviets ‘refuse to tell the truth’ and compared this with the United States, arguing that the United States, as an open state, shared their information about the incident ‘honestly and completely’ (Reagan 1983d). This fear of Soviet secrecy was reflected in Reagan’s approach to working with the Soviet Union, particularly in regards to arms control. Although Reagan developed a positive personal relationship with Gorbachev he nevertheless insisted that arms control be grounded on verification (Krass 1985; Massie 2013). His approach of ‘trust but verify’, despite the use of the word trust, was, with its focus on verification, premised on mistrust: the default setting for dealings with the USSR. Reagan’s statement in 1987 that ‘nations do not distrust each other because they’re armed; they are armed because they distrust each other’ (Reagan 1987b) sums up the

role of mistrust in the Cold War, partly a consequence of perceptions of Soviet secretiveness and deceitfulness, which formed a third key Cold War understanding.

#### ***Understanding 4 – A Global Zero-sum Battle Between the Leader of the Free World and an Aggressive Soviet Empire***

The three perceived fundamental differences outlined above created a sense of threat and influenced over-arching understandings of US-Soviet relations and Cold War strategy in three specific ways. The first centred on identity and role: that the United States and the ‘free world’ were in danger from an aggressive empire and that the United States was compelled to respond. Although scholars such as Johnson (1994) have argued that policy-makers over-exaggerated the threat, the narrative was a core feature of Cold War framing and understanding. As Hughes and Dockrill suggest, at ‘the core of the Cold War was the mutually perceived fear of a possible surprise attack’ meaning that the United States depicted the USSR in the worst possible light (Hughes and Dockrill 2006: 1). The universal nature of both ideologies, alongside a bipolar international system, meant that the Cold War was understood as a global and zero-sum competition between the leader of the free world and an aggressive Soviet empire. Subsequently US planners had to prepare for worst case scenarios. The global nature meant that Soviet actions in other states was seen as intrinsic to US interests and security; any place where the Soviets sought expansion or influence beyond the Soviet bloc was seen as a direct threat. As Ponting notes, ‘events in every part of the world were part of this overall struggle and were interpreted within the general context’ (Ponting 1999: 253). US leaders consequently recognised a need to proactively counter communism and contain the USSR, increasingly in the third world as the Cold War progressed (Westad 2005; Latham 2010; Harper 2011: 139-140).

The perception of the Soviet Union as an enemy and a threat to the United States, and the need to lead the ‘free world’, was clear in internal documents and public pronouncements. Kennan’s Long Telegram emphasised a unique leadership role for the United States in responding to the Soviet threat and portrayed Soviet ambitions as the ‘total destruction of rival power’ (Kennan 1946). NSC 20/4 outlined that ‘the

will and ability of the leaders of the USSR to pursue policies which threaten the security of the United States constitute the greatest single danger to the US', and warned that Soviet leaders aspired to 'domination of the world' (National Security Council 1948). The document warned of the 'danger of war at any time', with the Soviet Union depicted as an imperial power bent on 'bringing the free world under its domination' (National Security Council 1948). Then Senator John Foster Dulles (later Secretary of State) argued in 1949 that Soviet communism aspired to 'no less than world domination' (Toulouse 1985: 227).

NSC 48-2, which outlined a US policy of preventing further expansion of communism and reducing Soviet influence in Asia, alongside Truman's military response to the invasion of South Korea, highlights the understanding that the United States saw itself as having the role of containing the USSR across the globe (National Security Council 1949). As Bowie and Herrmann (1998: 4) note, the states emerging from the collapse of colonialism were seen as especially vulnerable to Soviet influence. NSC 68 reinforced the understanding of the global nature of the Soviet threat and its political origins, outlining that:

The assault on free institutions is world-wide now, and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere [...] Thus unwillingly our free society finds itself mortally challenged by the Soviet system [...] The Kremlin design seeks to impose order among nations by means which would destroy our free and democratic system (National Security Council 1950).

In arguing that the 'survival of the whole free world' was at stake, the report framed the Cold War as a 'total struggle'. As 'the center of power in the free world' NSC 68 argued that the United States bore 'a heavy responsibility for leadership' and had 'no choice but to demonstrate the superiority of the idea of freedom' (National Security Council 1950). The Cold War was thus framed as being unavoidably zero-sum and isolationism was explicitly rejected by NSC 68.

In a speech to the American people Truman outlined the US identity of leader of global freedom, arguing that it was necessary for the good of the world and US security:

The Communists in the Kremlin are engaged in a monstrous conspiracy to stamp out freedom all over the world. If they were to succeed, the United States would be numbered among their principal victims. It must be clear to everyone that the United States cannot—and will not—sit idly by and await foreign conquest (Truman 1951b).

NSC 162/2 outlined that assuming the role of ‘leader of the free world’ and taking on responsibility for the freedom of other states was ‘a direct and essential contribution to its own [the United States’] freedom and security’ (National Security Council 1953: 9). The theme of leading the free world against Soviet threat was consistent across the Cold War and, as will be outlined later, was reflected in key policies, such as the creation of NATO and stationing of US troops in Europe. In 1952 Eisenhower described ‘any faltering in America’s leadership as a capital offense against freedom (Eisenhower 1952). In 1953 he stated that ‘destiny has laid upon our country the responsibility of the free world’s leadership (Eisenhower 1953a). NSC 162/2 described the Cold War as a ‘world struggle’ and outlined that the primary threat to US security and values came from ‘Soviet hostility to the non-communist world’ and warned of Soviet objectives being the ‘eventual domination of the non-communist world’ (National Security Council 1953: 1-2&8). As such the document warned that unaligned states in the third world could alter the balance of power if their manpower, resources and potential for growth were absorbed into the Soviet bloc (National Security Council 1953:13). In relation to the Middle East Eisenhower argued that the Soviet ambition of global domination meant it was likely that the USSR sought to dominate the Middle East and declared that the United States, in contrast, would fulfil its responsibilities ‘to make certain that freedom – including

our own- may be secure' (Eisenhower 1957a). In light of tensions in Berlin, Eisenhower described 'the Communist Empire' as continuing 'to seek world domination' (Eisenhower 1959).

During the Cuban Missile Crisis the framing of the Soviet Union as an aggressive empire was a key theme, with Kennedy publicly calling on Khrushchev to 'abandon this course of world domination' (Kennedy 1962b). Always the comparison was with the United States as the leader of the free world. Indeed, such was the frequency of this narrative that Bohlen expressed concern in 1964 that such was the level of rhetoric describing the United States as 'destined for world leadership' that it caused irritation for some other states (Bohlen 1964: 28). Johnson, in reference to Vietnam stated that:

A threat to any nation in that region is a threat to all, and a threat to us [...] This is not a jungle war but a struggle for freedom on every front of human activity (Johnson 1964).

Johnson's framing captured the twin elements of leading the free world and the importance of this to America's own security, explaining in April 1965 that:

We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny. And only in such a world will our own freedom be finally secure [...] we will always oppose the effort of one nation to conquer another nation (Johnson 1965b).

Reviewing America's role since the end of World War II, Nixon argued in 1971 that for the previous twenty five years 'the United States was not only the leader of the non-Communist world, it was the primary supporter and defender of this free world as well' (Nixon 1971). Gerald Ford sustained this narrative, telling Congress in 1975 US leadership since the end of World War II has 'sustained and advanced the security, well-being, and freedom of millions of human beings besides ourselves' but warned that, unlike the United States, the USSR would not show 'restraint in the face of [...] weakness or irresolution' (Ford 1975).

As Garthoff (1994: 997-1146) suggests, detente collapsed in part because of Soviet action in other parts of the world and US perceptions of the USSR as a global threat, with the Iranian Revolution, Nicaraguan Revolution and invasion of Afghanistan amplifying these concerns. Reinforcing the zero-sum framing of the Cold War, Carter depicted the Soviet Union as an aggressive power and a threat to free states, promising that Soviet force designed to take control of the region would be considered as an assault on US interests and would be 'costly to every political and economic relationship it [the USSR] values' (Carter 1980). Listing several on-going conflicts in the world, including in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Ethiopia, Reagan attributed the cause to each as 'the consequence of an ideology imposed from without' (Reagan 1985b). Reagan explicitly linked democracy to security, arguing that, 'the surest guarantee we have of peace is national freedom and democratic government (Reagan 1986). As Dockrill and Hughes (2006) outline, this perception of threat meant that policy-makers assumed the worst about international events involving the Soviet Union and often misinterpreted events because of this.

### ***Understanding 5 - US Model Superior, Making Change in the USSR Possible***

A further central understanding and Cold War narrative was that the United States and the West were superior to the Soviet Union and communist world. Whilst the consequences of direct war would be so severe that this could only ever be a last resort, it was felt that, alongside containment, Western superiority made change in the Soviet Union possible, or even likely in the long-term. Many policy-makers felt

that as the strengths of the Western system became increasingly clear and the Soviet weaknesses more apparent, the Soviet system would become increasingly unsustainable.

Public pronouncements of US superiority were common and unsurprising in the context of conflict. In 1953 Truman predicted change in the USSR as the free world became, 'more attractive to men on both sides of the Iron Curtain' (Truman 1953). Kennedy described US democratic institutions serving as 'beacon lights for other nations' (Kennedy 1961a). In 1984 Reagan belittled the 'fantasy of a Communist triumph over democracy' (Reagan 1984). Bush, in May 1989, argued that, 'the superiority of free societies and free markets over stagnant socialism is undeniable' (Bush 1989c). While such narratives were to be expected in a public arena, this is still significant as it served to perpetuate the narrative within US political culture.

The theme of superiority was also evident in policy and planning documents. Kennan's (1946) Long Telegram suggested that there was no evidence that the Soviet system had the capacity to survive long-term and that the party provided no emotional inspiration to the population, who were far removed from Soviet doctrines. Clifford's report to Truman outlined the importance of demonstrating that capitalism 'is at least the equal of communism' (Clifford 1964: 75). Kennan's *Foreign Affairs* article in 1947 opined that it was highly likely that Soviet power, 'bears within it the seeds of its own decay, and that the sprouting of these seeds is well advanced' (Kennan 1947: 866). NSC 68 was particularly clear about the potential to promote Soviet change by demonstrating US superiority. It outlined that the, 'idea of slavery can only be overcome by the timely and persistent demonstration of the superiority of the idea of freedom' (National Security Council 1950). It argued that, because of the limitations on military options, the United States had:

No choice but to demonstrate the superiority of the idea of freedom  
by its constructive application, and to attempt to change the world

situation by means short of war in such a way as to frustrate the Kremlin design and hasten the decay of the Soviet system (National Security Council 1950).

Containment was a means to ‘foster the seeds of destruction within the Soviet system’ and, in the same way that Kennan described the West as more competent, NSC 68 described US ideology as more ‘vital and more valid than the ideology which is the fuel of Soviet dynamism’, the example of which could eventually bring about an internal change in the Soviet system’ (National Security Council 1950). These narratives and framings in the early Cold War years were also evident in its final years. The 1987 US *National Security Strategy* described the importance of projecting the ‘the image of the United States as the light of freedom throughout the world’ (White House 1987: 41). The 1990 *National Security Strategy* described American messages of democracy and human rights as ‘inspiring today as it was forty-five years ago’ (White House 1990: 18). As this section highlighted, the idea of the United States and its political values as superior to the USSR were central to Cold War understandings.

### ***Understanding 6 – Limited Cooperation Necessary***

As zero-sum and universal as the Cold War was understood to be at a moral and ideological level, there was recognition that limited cooperation with the USSR was necessary for mutual security and this was an important feature of understandings of the Cold War. As Nye (1987: 375-378) has pointed out, the US-Soviet relationship involved a patchwork of sub-issues, and nuclear cooperation formed one of these. Despite the on-going acceptance of the importance of maintaining a nuclear deterrent, the most obvious and important aspect of relations requiring cooperation was the need to prevent nuclear war and control the proliferation of devastating arms, which saw the agreement of several arms control treaties, such as the ABM Treaty signed in 1972 SALT II agreements and the START Treaty (Schenck and Youmans 2012; Woolf, Kerr and Nikitin 2015: 1-10). The Cold War, while a threat to the American way of life, prosperity and values, also came to be seen as an



apocalyptic threat to mankind due to the evolution of weapons technology, with scholars such as Gaddis (1999: 269) and Jervis (2001: 57), suggesting that nuclear weapons refrained both states from pushing the other as hard as was possible and preventing the United States and Soviet Union from engaging in direct conflict.

Despite some neoconservatives serving under Reagan advising against negotiation (Matlock 2010: 219), cooperation and engagement was more commonplace as the Cold War progressed, particularly during Reagan's second term (Matlock 2004; Mann 2009: 291-306; Fischer 2010). However, the recognition of the need for limited cooperation was apparent under Truman and was a consistent Cold War feature. NSC 68 emphasised the need to leave open 'the possibility of negotiation' and noted that it would be preferable if atomic weapons could be eliminated from peacetime arrangements (National Security Council 1950). Whilst Truman's farewell address focused on the 'all-embracing struggle', he also highlighted the importance of material factors in policy-maker thinking, noting that 'always in the background has been the atomic bomb' (Truman 1953). NSC 162/2 (1953: 9-10), likewise, was not hopeful about negotiation but emphasised that the United States needed to keep the option open. It highlighted that atomic control could be achieved only through enforceable safeguards that could be inspected and verified. Recognising that global 'conflict under modern conditions could mean the destruction of civilization', Eisenhower, in 1959, argued that America sought 'meaningful negotiation [...] at any time and under any circumstance' (Eisenhower 1959).

Even before the Cuban Missile Crisis Kennedy publicly warned of the dangers of planned or accidental nuclear war and championed cooperation. In 1961 he stated:

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms—and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations (Kennedy 1961a).

This theme was even more apparent following the crisis, with Kennedy warning in June 1963 that if total war ever broke out it was the United States and Soviet Union that would be the primary targets and most in danger of devastation. As such he argued that both states had a ‘mutually deep interest’ in ‘halting the arms race’ (Kennedy 1963: 288). Sorensen recalled in 1964 Kennedy’s concern about nuclear proliferation and his firm belief in a test ban treaty, recognising that ‘modern weapons, did not permit or require a victory of one system over another’ (Sorensen 1964: 74&93). Indeed, Bohlen was of the view that it was ‘the horrors of nuclear war [that] has been the factor that has produced the possibility for this non-fighting between us and the Soviet Union’ (Bohlen 1964: 7).

State Department historians describe Johnson initiating SALT talks in order to gain ‘control of the ABM race’ whilst Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara argued that in responding to each other’s escalations both sides were choosing ‘an insane road to follow’ (US Department of State 2013). The process of increased cooperation was evident during Nixon’s years in office, such as the signing of the SALT agreement. Indeed, the twelve principles listed in the *Basic Principles of Mutual Relations Between the United States and USSR* document, that was agreed at the Moscow Summit in May 1972, opened with the agreement that ‘in the nuclear age there is no alternative to conducting their mutual relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence’ (1972).

Ford’s address on foreign policy in 1975 made clear that his administration had an interest in cooperating on nuclear security, outlining that ‘central to US-Soviet relations today is the critical negotiation to control strategic nuclear weapons’ (Ford 1975). Reagan certainly recognised the importance of cooperation with the USSR on arms control (Fischer 2010). The post-Geneva joint *communiqué* in November 1985, for instance, declared that ‘a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought’ demonstrated a tone of cooperation and mutual ambition (*Joint Soviet-United States Statement on the Summit Meeting in Geneva*: 1985). Matlock recalls that at Reykjavik that aside from ballistic missiles and laboratories the leaders had agreed on all other points of nuclear and strategic arms that the ‘extent of agreement on key

points was unprecedented' (Matlock 2004: 239). While Cold War objectives remained consistent, the US-Soviet relationship evolved (though not consistently or in a clearly linear fashion) into one that increasingly recognised the importance of US-Soviet cooperation for mutual nuclear security despite on-going competition.

### **Understandings of the Cold War's Conclusion and Expectations for the Post-Cold War Era**

The post-Cold War case studies in Chapters Three to Five set out Cold War influences specific to each case. However, there are five over-arching stated understandings of the Cold War's end, and expectations for the post-Cold War era, that are significant for wider post-Cold War US-Russian relations and have relevance across the case studies. These broad, stated understandings are set out briefly below and are drawn from George H. W. Bush's term as president. His administration's public interpretation and policy-decisions were the bridge between understandings of the Cold War and post-Cold War eras and contributed to lasting narratives as well as influencing the parameters of policy-options for future leaders. The understandings are drawn from the administration's public pronouncements and internal planning documents. They focus on ideas of American and Russian identity and their subsequent roles in a transformed international system. As with the understandings of the Cold War, there were a range of ways that the Cold War's end could be interpreted and understood (Adam 2010) and those outlined here were powerful discourses but do not necessarily reflect all actors. As Paul J. Saunders notes, even within the Republican Party there were 'fractured views' of Russia at the end of the Cold War (Saunders 2014). However, the interpretations outlined below represent the highest level of articulation as found in key policy documents and administration speeches.

#### ***The United States Won the Cold War and the Soviet Union Lost***

The first key stated understanding, highly prevalent within foreign policy circles, was that the Cold War's end constituted a victory for the West generally and America specifically (Simes 2007: 36; Leffler 1992: 496; Schrecker 2004; Matlock 2010: x;

Rutland and Dubinsky 2008: 258-260). Many Russia experts, including Matlock (2010: 5) and Sakwa (2008: 253) argue that Russia was not a defeated power. However, for the majority of US actors the end of the Cold War was perceived and portrayed as a US victory. There was a clear discourse regarding the apparent success of US political principles prior to the break-up of the USSR, as Gorbachev's changes were recognised. Describing a US-led order as moving towards the 'universal aspirations of mankind', Bush described democratic trends 'confirm[ing] the wisdom of our nation's founders' (Bush 1991a). According to Johnson (1994: 184), Bush used the term 'new world order' at least forty-two times publicly between the summer of 1990 and end of March 1991. The 1991 *National Security Strategy* reaffirmed the view that the vision set out by the founding fathers 'speaks to humanities hopes and aspirations' (White House 1991: v). While, as will be outlined, the interpretation of victory included the idea of the victory of Western ideas and concepts generally, there was nevertheless a clear narrative that victory was uniquely American and based on American values and principles. This narrative was particularly prominent following the break-up of the Soviet Union. George H. W. Bush declared in January 1992 that:

By the grace of God, America won the Cold War [...] the Cold War didn't end; it was won. And I think of those who won it, in places like Korea and Vietnam. And some of them didn't come back. Back then they were heroes, but this year they were victors (Bush 1992a).

In the same speech Bush described America as:

Still and ever the freest nation on Earth, the kindest nation on Earth, the strongest nation on Earth [...] a rising nation, the once and future miracle that is still, this night, the hope of the world (Bush 1992a).

US Defense Department planners described the end of the Cold War as a ‘victory’ in official documents (US Department of Defense 1992a: 1). Matlock (2014) recalls that there was a strong view within government that the Cold War had ended in victory, especially amongst neoconservatives.

In August 1992 Bush declared that, following Cold War victory, ‘we believe that now the world looks more like America [...] the entire world is moving our way’ and urged Americans to ‘reap the rewards of our global victory’ (Bush 1992c). Later that year Bush suggested that it was ‘American leadership that undermined the confidence and capacity of the Communist regimes [and] became a beacon for all the peoples of the world’ and, reflecting on victory, argued that ‘no one person deserves credit for this. America does’ (Bush 1992e). He suggested that this created ‘a unique opportunity to see the principles for which America has stood for two centuries, democracy, free enterprise, and the rule of law, spread more widely than ever before in human history’ (Bush 1992e). The 1993 *National Security Strategy* argued that Cold War ‘victory would have been impossible without long-term American political, economic and military strength, with commitment and leadership’ and stated that ‘democracy was the ideology on which our victory was based’ (White House 1993: 1&4).

While US officials were generally careful not to cast Russia as a defeated power, there was still evidence of this discourse. As Hunter outlines, for many victory was seen not just as a triumph but as a vindication of US foreign policy that had been framed as “us” versus “them”, and as such, for some actors, the Soviet Union was seen as defeated (Hunter 2010: 2-3). As Chapter One noted, this was not the Russian view and, indeed, many US scholars have criticised the United States for pursuing policies in the post-Cold War era that treat Russia as a defeated power (Cohen 2010; Schrecker 2004).

While not as prevalent as the idea of US victory, the narrative of Russian defeat was still a feature of US discourse. For some actors an important component of the

victory narrative was that the USSR, of which, Russia was clearly recognised as the imperial centre, lost the Cold War. As Bush outlined, the ‘Soviet Union did not simply lose the Cold War; the Western democracies won it’ and argued that in creating the new international system the ‘foundation must be the democratic community that won the cold war’ (Bush 1992e). In the 1992 *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney celebrated ‘the dissolution of freedom’s most powerful adversary, the Soviet Union’ (US Department of Defense 1992b: v). Lieven (2004: 167) argues that as far as many officials were concerned the end of the Soviet Union hardly changed at all their hostility towards Russia as a state – unless Russia adopted a position of complete subservience to America’s wishes in the world as the victorious power.

### ***United States a Unique Nation and Global Leader***

Connected to the interpretation of US victory was the understanding that victory reinforced the United States’ identity as a unique country with a global leadership role (Sakwa 2014: 112; Lieven 2004). US exceptionalism was reinforced by the Cold War but it altered its direction, with policy-makers recognising that active, foreign leadership was necessary. This role was understood to be essential to US and global security but was also understood to be legitimised by Cold War leadership and to be welcomed by international society, with the United States trusted to use its power morally. The success of Cold War leadership was seen to endorse a post-Cold War leadership role.

A key theme of Bush’s public addresses between 1991 and 1993 was the United States as a unique global leader, frequently linking to the US Cold War role. In 1991 Bush argued that ‘we are the Nation that can shape the future [...] American leadership is indispensable’ (Bush 1991a). Describing American leadership as ‘instrumental’ in ending the Cold War, Bush depicted US leadership as welcomed by the other states, arguing that:

The hopes of humanity turn to us. We are Americans; we have a unique responsibility to do the hard work of freedom [...] we must step forward and accept our responsibility to lead the world away from the dark chaos of dictators, toward the brighter promise of a better day (Bush 1991a).

He went on to suggest that ‘only the United States of America has both the moral standing and the means’ to do this and that previous leadership and building up of US strength ‘has made America the beacon of freedom in a searching world’ (Bush 1991a). In his 1992 State of the Union address he described America as ‘the undisputed leader of the age’ (Bush 1992a) and suggested that:

A world once divided into two armed camps now recognizes one sole and preeminent power, the United States of America. And they regard this with no dread. For the world trusts us with power [...] we are the United States of America, the leader of the West that has become the leader of the world. And as long as I am President, I will continue to lead (Bush 1992a).

Later that year Bush argued that the post-Cold War era, like the Cold War era, would:

Require American vision and resolve, an America secure in its military, moral, and economic strength [...] a new world made better, with our friends and allies, again by American leadership (Bush 1992e).

In 1992 Bush argued that the, 'qualities that enabled us to triumph in that struggle [the Cold War], faith, strength, unity, and above all, American leadership, are those we must call upon now to win the peace'. He went onto suggest that:

The leadership, the power, and yes, the conscience of the United States of America, all are essential for a peaceful, prosperous international order, just as such an order is essential for us (Bush 1992e).

In 1993 Bush warned that without US leadership a world 'characterized by violent, characterized by chaos' could emerge and emphasised that:

In the wake of the cold war, in a world where we are the only remaining superpower, it is the role of the United States to marshal its moral and material resources to promote a democratic peace. It is our responsibility, it is our opportunity to lead (Bush 1993a).

The themes of US uniqueness and the importance of maintaining the Cold War-forged identity and role as global leader were clear in key policy and planning documents. The 1991 *National Security Strategy* asserted that in the new era 'American leadership is indispensable' and argued that, 'as for much of this century, there is no substitute for American leadership [...] America's role is rooted not only in power, but also in trust' (White House 1991: V&2). The leaked 'Defense Planning Guidance', produced in February 1992 and overseen by Wolfowitz and Cheney, set out the US aim of playing the role 'of leader and galvanizer of the world community' and outlined that 'in the midst of a new era of fundamental worldwide change, US leadership in world affairs will remain a constant fixture' (US Department of Defense 1992a: 1&5).



In an annual defence report to the President and Congress Cheney argued that during the Cold War the United States was able to ‘exercise a leadership role in shaping the course of and direction of world affairs. We must maintain that capability in the years ahead’ (US Department of Defense 1992b: xii). The 1993 Department of Defense report *Defense Strategy for the 1990s* outlined a vision of the ‘integration of the leading democracies into a US-led system of collective security (US Department of Defense 1993: 1). The 1993 *National Security Strategy* suggested that a peaceful and democratic world could be achieved with ‘the leadership that only America can provide’ and outlined that the United States needed to display more of ‘the same kind of global leadership that we exercised throughout the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’ (White House 1993: i-ii). Reflecting on Cold War success, the strategy suggested that, ‘the weak have always looked to the United States to be strong, to be capable, and to care. Perhaps more than anything else, they have depended on us to lead. And lead we have’ (White House 1993: i). As such, the strategy argued, the United States enjoyed ‘great credibility in the eyes of the world’ (White House 1993: 2). The strategy directly linked Cold War and post-Cold War US identity and role, suggesting that:

For forty years, the United States served as both symbol and spokesman for democracy world-wide [...] No other nation has the same combination of moral, cultural, political, economic, and military credibility. No other has won such confidence, respect, and trust. No other has the same potential and indeed responsibility for world leadership (White House 1993: 4&21).

### ***Democracy the Final Form of Government***

Victory was not only understood as the Western states over the Soviet Union – it was also deemed a victory for Western and US ideas and values, particularly freedom, democracy, and free-markets (Rutland 2000: 243). Alternatives to Western political systems were seen as defeated and discredited. Whilst most famously articulated by Fukuyama (1992), policy-makers were also clear in their understandings that

democracy was the final and most sophisticated form of government. In January 1992 Bush rejoiced that ‘communism died this year’ (Bush 1992a) and in August 1992 argued that, ‘the cold war is over, and freedom finished first’ (Bush 1992c). Bush reinforced this point in December, describing the Cold War era as being a global division between the competing ideologies and declared that, ‘the Cold War is over. Freedom carried the day’ and had prevailed in a ‘titanic clash of political systems’ (Bush 1992e). This was a key theme in government policy documents. The 1991 *National Security Strategy* set out that ‘Communist orthodoxy is discredited’ (White House 1991: 5). The leaked defence planning document described the ‘discrediting of Communism as an ideology with global pretensions and influence’ (US Department of Defence 1992a: 1). The 1993 *National Security Strategy* reinforced this framing, describing communism as ‘discredited, despised, and discarded’ and argued that ‘democracy was the ideology on which our victory in the Cold War was based’ (White House 1993: i&4).

Later chapters focus on the nature of US democracy promotion but it is important to note here that the expectation of democratisation was a clear feature of political discourse during this period. It was widely expected that, while there were still challenges, Cold War victory would spark a global diffusion of democracy and that the United States, as global leader, would actively contribute to this trend. Indeed, Matlock (2010: 221) notes that some actors felt it was a moral responsibility to spread democracy after the Cold War. Secretary of State James Baker outlined in 1990 that the administration’s new mission was ‘the promotion and consolidation of democracy’ (Baker 1990a). In January 1991 Bush described the ‘triumph of democratic ideas in Eastern Europe and Latin America and the continuing struggle for freedom elsewhere all around the world’ (Bush 1991a). In 1992 Bush expressed his commitment to ‘expanding the democratic community by supporting political and economic freedom in nascent democracies and market economies’ (Bush 15 December 1992e) and in 1993 outlined five major objectives for the post-Cold War era, the first of which was ‘promoting and consolidating democratic values’ (Bush 1993b). The assumed scope of this democratisation was such that the 1991 *National Security Strategy* encouraged democracy promotion in Africa as the United States was promoting ‘values that have proven universal’ and described the western

hemisphere as heading towards ‘a completely democratic hemisphere’ (White House 1993: 8&10). Bush declared that he looked ‘forward to being the first President to visit a free, democratic Cuba’ (Bush 1992c), and on another occasion argued that in ‘Latin America, the day of the dictator has given way to the dawn of democracy’ (Bush 1992e).

This expectation, and the idea of US values and ideas being universal, was plainly stated in key government strategies. Describing the Cold war as a ‘war of ideas’, the 1991 *National Security Strategy* framed victory as a decisive step towards a ‘truly global community [...] vindicating our democratic values’ (White House 1991: 14). The document detailed plans to create a new world in which US values would spread, based on the assumption that democratisation was a ‘worldwide phenomenon’ and that US ‘values have proved universal’ (White House 1991: 8&10). Department of Defense planning documents reveal the ambition to ‘encourage the spread of democratic government and open economic systems’ (US Department of Defense 1992a: 2). The 1993 *National Security Strategy* argued that the world had moved ‘from one historical period to another [...] people and nations [are] introducing democratic and free market institutions and values’ and outlined that the United States had an important role to play in ‘fostering democracy worldwide’ (White House 1993: i&4).

As during the Cold War, the spread of democracy was seen as moral but also linked to US security and interests. The 1991 *National Security Strategy* expressed that US ‘interests are best served in a world in which democracy and its ideals are widespread and secure’ (White House 1991: 4). The document outlined that, as during the Cold War, the United States would, ‘continue to pursue a strategy that expands and strengthens market economies around the world’, emphasising that a strong economic position was necessary for global US political leadership (White House 1991: 3&19). Addressing the UN in early 1992, Bush argued that the institutions of free societies are, ‘our strongest safeguards against aggression and tyranny [...] Democracy, human rights, the rule of law, these are the building blocks of peace and freedom’ (Bush 1992b).

Bush regularly repeated these points when addressing US domestic audiences. His 1992 State of the Union address outlined the importance of an open-market system to US interests, noting that ‘the key to our economic future is to ensure that America continues as an economic leader of the world [...] We will work to open markets everywhere’ (Bush 1992a). Accepting the Republican presidential nomination in August 1992 Bush argued that ‘we know that when freedom grows, America grows. Just as a strong America means a safer world, we have learned that a safer world means a stronger America’ (Bush 1992c). In December 1992 he repeated this theme, stating that:

The advance of democratic ideals reflects a hard-nosed sense of our own, of American self-interest. For certain truths have, indeed, now become evident: Governments responsive to the will of the people are not likely to commit aggression. They are not likely to sponsor terrorism or to threaten humanity with weapons of mass destruction. Likewise, the global spread of free markets, by encouraging trade, investment, and growth, will sustain the expansion of American prosperity. In short, by helping others, we help ourselves [...] strategically, abandonment of the worldwide democratic revolution could be disastrous for American security (Bush 1992e).

In setting the preservation of US freedom as the central objective of national defence policy, the Department of Defense described ‘helping other countries preserve or obtain freedom and peace is in part a means to this objective’ and outlined the importance of protecting free commerce to ‘ensure US access to world markets’ (US Department of Defence 1992a: 1&7). Similarly, the 1993 *National Security Strategy* outlined that promoting democracy was ‘is in our national interest [...] history teaches us that representative governments responsive to their people are least likely to turn to aggression against neighbours’ (White House 1993: 3). Support for

democratisation in the post-Cold War era was thus understood as a moral endeavour and a means to enhance US security and interests.

### ***Russia Will Move Towards the West in Domestic and Foreign Policy***

Based on the idea of victory for the West and the proven superiority and legitimacy of Western political systems and values, there was a narrative, despite perceptions of Soviet defeat, that Russia would move towards Western political and economic models and become a supportive partner to the United States (Gvosdev 2008: 6-9; Rutland 2000: 244). US expectations for Russian support were informed not only by its political transformation but by increased Soviet cooperation in the final stages of the Cold War, such as Soviet support during the Gulf War, and institutional documents suggested that this cooperation would be likely to increase as the Soviet Union further reformed (White House 1991: 5). The disintegration of the Soviet Union reinforced narratives of Russia's cooperative trajectory. The detail of US assumptions about Russia's trajectory and post-communist transition is addressed in the following chapter. However, it is important to note that from early 1992 the narrative of Russia moving towards the United States was a feature of political discourse. Speaking in February 1992, at a meeting with Yeltsin, Bush suggested that:

This historic meeting is yet another confirmation of the end of the Cold War and the dawn of a new era. Russia and the United States are charting a new relationship. And it's based on trust; it's based on a commitment to economic and political freedom [...] So we agreed here that we're going to pull closer together economically and politically (Hanhmaki and Westad 2004: 632-633).

There was a stated expectation that Russia would support a US-led international system. In June 1992 the two states signed a *Charter for American-Russian Partnership and Friendship* which outlined that the relationship proceeded from a

‘mutual trust and respect and a common commitment to democracy’ (White House 1992a). Declassified meeting notes from a meeting between Yeltsin and Bush at Camp David detail that Bush had told Yeltsin that the US-Russian relationship was one of friendship and the states were no longer adversaries (White House 1992b). James Baker later reflected that he had seen Yeltsin as a reformer who wanted to move Russia towards democracy (Baker: *no date available*). Bush predicted that the Freedom Support Act (FSA) would:

Help transform former enemies into peaceful partners. This democratic peace will be built on the solid foundations of political and economic freedom in Russia and the other independent states (Bush 1992d).

Such were US expectations for Russia’s transition that by late 1992 Bush described a ‘democratic Russia’ as a ‘concrete reality[ies]’, something he attributed to ‘American leadership, American power, and perhaps most of all, American moral force’ (Bush 1992e). The 1993 *National Security Strategy* outlined that ‘our former adversaries are now our partners’ (White House January 1993:2). Officials across government were also reportedly hopeful of partnership. One senior State Department official recalls that there were ‘great hopes from within US government and from me personally’. She later came to recognise that officials had been ‘too optimistic about Russia, and had expected Russia to become like the United States’ (Senior US State Department official 2014). Paul J. Saunders, suggests that in his experience optimism in the early 1990s was considerable and that much of ‘the US elite got carried away with excitement’ (Saunders 2014). Steven Pifer (2014) who had been based in the US embassy in Moscow in the late 1980s before returning to the State Department, recalls that there was perceived to be a huge opportunity to cement a new relationship and that, while there was a recognition that it would not be easy, there was a general consensus about Russia’s positive trajectory within government. This was despite, as noted, for some actors the end of the Cold War was seen as a defeat for the Soviet Union.

### ***Threats Remain, Including from Nuclear Weapons***

Despite expectations for democracy's spread, the administration was clear that security challenges remained. As with the Cold War, nuclear weapons were highlighted as an over-riding threat to US security and the discourse of threat featured heavily in planning documents and the administration's public pronouncements. The 1991 *National Security Strategy* outlined that 'even in a new era, deterring nuclear attack remains the number one defense priority of the United States' (White House 1991: 25). In January 1992 Bush warned that:

There is much more to do regarding weapons of mass destruction [...] Today, the threat of global nuclear war is more distant than at any time in the nuclear era. Drawing down the old cold war arsenals will further ease that dread. But the spectre of mass destruction remains all too real, especially as some nations continue to push to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them (Bush 1992b).

In 1992 Bush detailed cuts in defence spending but warned that the world still presented many dangers, particularly from nuclear weapons. As such the president restated his request for additional funding for the Strategic Defense Initiative to 'protect our country from limited nuclear missile attack. We must have this protection because too many people in too many countries have access to nuclear arms' (Bush 1992a). The Department of Defense outlined that deterring nuclear attack remained the number one priority, citing Russia's arsenal, and that the United States thus needed to maintain and modernise its own nuclear capability (US Department of Defense 1992a: 7). In January 1993 Bush, again emphasised the importance of US world leadership, arguing that whilst the 'likelihood of nuclear holocaust is vastly diminished' nuclear threats remained and, without US leadership, the world risked dictators building 'arsenals brimming with weapons of mass destruction [...] with American citizens more at risk than ever before' (Bush 1993a).

The 1993 *National Security Strategy* outlined that deterring nuclear attack remained the top priority and that one of the biggest threats in the post-Cold War era was weapons of mass destruction spreading (White House 1993: 14-15).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, as complex and multi-layered as the Cold War was, six specific policy-maker understandings of US-Soviet relations can be identified that, while varying temporally, appeared consistent across the Cold War. The understandings, of course, were not felt with equal depth (if at all) by all domestic groups. Numerous scholars have outlined different domestic schools of policy-makers understandings about the post-Cold War era, such as McFaul and Goldgeier's (2003: 5) distinction between regime transformers and power balancers. However, the narratives outlined in the chapter formed prominent narratives and framings both in political discourse and governmental policy and planning documents and were important features within US political culture. These understandings, arrived at through surveying the speeches and policies of Cold War policy-makers, alongside key guiding documents, were often mutually reinforcing and over-lapping. However, they are most easily understood as three themes of irreconcilable difference and three subsequent themes articulating how these differences informed the nature of US-Soviet relations and Cold War strategies

The three understandings of difference centred on political systems and values, morality, and openness with the international community. The three understandings of US-Soviet relations and Cold War strategy were the need to lead the free world in containing and countering the Soviet threat across the globe, demonstrating the superiority of the US model and values to promote change within socialist states and, finally, treating the relationship as zero-sum in ideational terms but practically cooperating where necessary on issues of mutual security, primarily related to nuclear security. These positions were understood to be moral and in the global interest but were also tied to perceptions of US security and national interests.



With the end of the Cold War several key understandings and narratives emerged concerning expectations for the post-Cold War, based on ideas about US and Russian identity and the nature of the post-Cold War international system. These were: the understanding that the Cold War was a US victory and that the United States was unique state with a legitimised global leadership role; that states around the globe would move towards democracy and that the United States would support this trend; that Russia would support US agendas and also move towards Western models domestically, and; finally, that threats remained, particularly from nuclear weapons. As the following chapters will demonstrate, these narratives and framings had an important influence on US foreign policy towards Russia in the post-Cold War era, both in terms of the stated expectations and a reliance on the historical framings and attitudes in periods of uncertainty.

## CHAPTER THREE

### NATO Enlargement in the 1990s

#### Introduction

As the thesis has outlined, there was optimism in the early 1990s about the future of US-Russian relations. However, by the end of the decade these hopes had receded significantly, with the first serious post-Cold War deterioration in relations occurring in the late 1990s. There were a number of reasons for this, including wars in Kosovo and Chechnya, Russian support for Iran, the level of assistance provided to Russia by the West and the slower than anticipated progress in Russian domestic politics. One important factor was NATO's decision, led by the United States, to enlarge into Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). NATO enlargement became not only, as Pierre and Trenin described at the time, 'the first major crisis in Russian-Western relations since the Cold War ended' (Pierre and Trenin 1997: 8) but also set-in motion a source of on-going and as yet unresolved US-Russian tension (Tsygankov 2013b; AFP Foundation 2014; Buckley 2015: 8; Lavrov 2015; Sakwa 2014: 218-219). As scholars such as Grayson (1999) and Goldgeier (1999) have detailed, multiple factors influenced the US decision to support and lead NATO enlargement, including powerful individual actors within bureaucracies and the demands of the CEE states themselves.

The decision was also significantly influenced, however, by three specific Cold War ideational legacies. Whilst influencing distinct domestic groups differently, these legacies combined to create wide support for enlargement. The first legacy was the liberal interpretation that enlargement would consolidate Cold War ideological victory by extending US values and political concepts across a united Europe. This was considered a natural continuation of US policy towards Europe as well as a guarantee of peace in the region and thus an important component of US security. The second ideational legacy was the perception that, having 'won' the Cold War, the United States was a legitimate global leader, with particular duties and interests in Europe. NATO enlargement was seen as a means to confirm the physical and symbolic US leadership role and identity. The final legacy was a retained distrust of

Russia, particularly strong amongst many conservatives and Republicans. For these actors Russia, as during the Cold War, was understood to have an inherently imperialistic character and was still seen primarily as a potential threat rather than partner. NATO enlargement was thus a continuation of the Cold War policy of containment. Overall, NATO enlargement was influenced by the consolidation, confirmation and continuation of specific Cold War ideas based on perceptions of identity, role and interests.

There was initially little indication that the Clinton administration planned to enlarge NATO. When the issue was seriously discussed there were reservations within the US bureaucracy, Russian elites were opposed, US defence spending in Europe was already significant and there was no apparent near-term threat to Europe. Russia specialists from across a range of disciplines warned against enlargement (at least in the short-term) because of the potential impacts on Russia's transition and US-Russian relations (Mead 1994; Kupchan 1994: 11; Dean 1995; Nunn and McFaul 1997/98: 35; Kennan 1997: 23; Bunn *et al.* 1997; Broder 1998; Danner, Kennan, Talbott and Hamilton 1998: 110; Kay 2014: 122). There were also, as will be outlined, other options for politically unifying and improving European security architecture, including EU enlargement, a greater role for the OSCE or slower approaches to enlarging NATO that placed more emphasis on Partnership for Peace (PfP). Despite this, the administration made NATO enlargement one of its foreign policy pillars and the United States was the key NATO state promoting and securing NATO enlargement. Clinton first publicly articulated the enlargement position in 1994 when asserting that the question of enlargement was 'no longer whether NATO will take on new members but when and how' (Clinton 1994c). Enlargement was of membership and scope – with a focus on new types of threats, including those out of area, to prevent instability in Europe (Talbott 1997). The approach placed, in theory, no restrictions on future membership as long as states met the expectations of membership.

Before outlining the ideational legacies, the chapter sets out the wider contextual factors that influenced perceptions of the need, and opportunities, for NATO

enlargement. The chapter concludes that the decision to support enlargement was significantly influenced by Cold War ideational legacies that shaped specific perceptions about US and Russian identities and roles in the post-Cold War era and that enlargement undermined the opportunity for improved US-Russian relations. It suggests that ideational legacies contributed to an approach, motivation and pace to enlargement that was unnecessarily rapid and sent mixed messages to Russia about its role in the international system and US attitudes towards Russia. This in itself potentially undermined more pressing and officially stated US priorities, such as enhancing nuclear security and encouraging democratisation in Russia. As analysts including Pierre and Trenin (1997), Kennan (1998) and Kupchan (2000) outlined, Russian support was more likely to be consistent and meaningful if Russia was confident with its place in the world, resilient from internal extremist political elements, perceived that its concerns were taken seriously and enjoyed a sense of security. Enlargement helped to undermine these factors. Despite Clinton often declaring that 'the Cold War is over' (Clinton 1993b, 1994d) and urging Moscow not to 'look at NATO through a Cold War prism' (Grayson 1999: 98), NATO enlargement highlighted the on-going influence of Cold War ideational legacies on US foreign policy and the subsequent impact on US-Russian relations. The legacy was heavily influenced by the influence of historically informed narratives, such as a legitimised US leadership role, entrenched attitudes towards Russia, institutional origins and notions of common identity in the 'West' formed in opposition to the USSR.

#### Context: Structures, Constraints and Opportunities

There were several contextual factors that made NATO enlargement seemingly unlikely. One of the most significant of these was that there was no significant or imminent security threat to NATO members. The lack of threat to Alliance members was recognised in NATO and US planning documents, which highlighted that it would take years for a large-scale threat to develop (NATO 1995b; US Department of Defense 1992a, 1997; US Department of State 1997). As Perlmutter and Carpenter (1998: 4) note, cost studies by the Pentagon and RAND were based on the assumption that NATO did not have an enemy. A Senate report in March 1998 summarised the situation when stating that for the 'indefinite future' there was 'no

immediate threat of large-scale conventional aggression in Europe' (Senate Executive Report 105-14, 105<sup>th</sup>, 1998). Swift enlargement was thus not required to counter any specific threat to members – NATO's core function.

A second factor that was a potential barrier to enlargement was Russia's importance to US foreign policy goals and the recognised importance of Russian transition. As Goldgeier and McFaul (2003: 330) have argued, following the Cold War nothing was more critical to US security interests than Russian internal transformation and its integration into the West. As such, there were strong incentives not to take unnecessary actions that could undermine Russian reform or provoke Russian perceptions of insecurity. The Nunn-Lugar Programme, a tripartite agreement with Russian and Ukraine to withdraw strategic nuclear weapons from Ukraine and the Russian-US Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) Agreement are examples of early successes that illustrate Russia's importance. As Cox (1994), Grayson (1999: 20), and MacLean (2006) have detailed, Clinton committed considerable time to the relationship. Indeed, as Garthoff (1997: 307) notes, within the first four and a half years of his presidency Clinton had met Yeltsin twelve times, including seven full bilateral summits. The Clinton administration invited Russian leaders to attend G-7 Summits, worked out a compromise to allow Russian forces to serve under US command in peacekeeping in Bosnia rather than NATO and supported Russian access to IMF funds (Mastanduno 1997: 70).

Russia's importance was a key narrative within the administration's public comments and policy planning documents. The 1994 *National Security Strategy* outlined the ambition of turning Russia into a diplomatic and economic partner, setting out that the democratisation of Russia and former communist states was more important than engagement in any other region (White House 1994: 19&23). In January 1994 Clinton told a European audience that of all the states emerging from the Warsaw Pact, the democratisation of Russia was the most important (Clinton 1994b). In 1995 then Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian affairs Richard Holbrooke (1995: 39) suggested that fostering a stable, democratic Russia was the most important political goal in Europe since the integration of West

Germany following WWII. Robert E. Hunter, US Ambassador to NATO from 1993 to 1998, argued in 1995 that nothing was 'so important to the future of European security than [...] a democratic, free-market society' in Russia (Hunter 1995). The consequences of a failed Russian transition would be, in then Secretary of State Warren Christopher's words, 'a renewed nuclear threat, higher defense budgets, spreading instability, the loss of new markets and a devastating setback for the worldwide democratic movement' (Christopher 1993). As Christopher summarised in December 1996, 'we can only build a new Europe free of tyranny, division, and war if Europe's largest nation is our full partner' (Christopher 10-11 December 1996b: 603). Other factors indicating that enlargement was unlikely included polling suggesting that the publics of the newly independent states favoured EU over NATO membership and justifying enlargement costs (Granville 1999: 166-167; Pourchot 1997: 60-65).

Despite this context, several factors encouraged or legitimised enlargement. One important example is conflict in non-NATO areas of Europe, with the potential to cause wider instability. This promoted the idea that NATO needed to adapt to address this new type of risk. As scholars including Posen (1993), Gagnon (1994: 166), Mueller (2000) and Gurr (2000: 53&61) have outlined, although there were other contributing factors, the Cold War's end made space for new conflicts as the international order adjusted and contributed to the release (or elite manipulation) of previously suppressed ethnic and nationalist tensions. The international community's failure to effectively respond to the Bosnian conflict prior to NATO and US involvement and signing of the Dayton Agreement highlighted the impact NATO could have in 'out of area' operations (Henrickson 2015; Daalder 2000). Despite domestic US debates regarding adding members from unstable regions with different political cultures, political instabilities in Europe with the potential for violence provided a rationale for many actors of the need to enlarge and adapt NATO (for example see, Gallis 1997; Cohen 1997; Perry 1995).

A second factor encouraging enlargement was the institutional need to adapt in order to maintain NATO's relevance. Fierke (1999: 34-35) has suggested that the threat to

NATO survival came not from security threats but shrinking budgets and the need to justify the continuing relevance of the alliance to publics and legislators. NATO officials recognised the need to adapt with the changing nature of Soviet-West relations. The London Declaration of July 1990 and NATO's New Strategic Concept in November 1991 outlined the changing political landscape and that NATO needed to evolve (NATO 1990, 1991). However, the Soviet collapse put NATO's future, and even existence, in greater doubt with the alliance's original purpose gone. Chalmers (1990) argued that with the threat that sustained NATO for forty years disappearing, the basic questions of security needed to be rethought and that a pan-European security organisation could be needed to replace NATO. De Santis (1991) suggested that the shift from a bipolar world and the West's lack of an enemy undermined NATO's *raison d'être* and meant that NATO could not survive indefinitely, arguing that policy-makers should begin planning for its dissolution. Realists in particular, such as Mearsheimer (1990) and Walt (1998), were sceptical of NATO's continuing relevance and predicted its reconfiguration or disbandment (for arguments concerning challenges to NATO's survival see: Carpenter (ed.) 1990). Patrick Warren (2010: 5) outlines that historically alliances formed to respond to external threats disintegrate when the threat disappears.

However, in keeping with Miskanen's (1994) theory that bureaucrats have personal motives, Daalder (April 1999: 7) notes that the Washington Treaty laid the basis for a large bureaucracy employing thousands of people, arguing that such large organisations rarely fade away (see also Hellman and Wolf 1993: 20; Walt 1987: 10). In order to survive NATO had to adapt – enlargement was one way to do this. Karsten Voigt, President of the North Atlantic Alliance, was unequivocal about this, explaining in 1996 that enlargement was 'essential to the future role and relevance of the Alliance' and in ensuring that the alliance was 'seen to be alive and responding to the needs of today' (Voight 1996). Reflecting on his involvement in securing enlargement ratification, Asmus (2002: 260) recalls that the Clinton administration wanted to convey that if NATO did not adapt it was doomed. As Senator Lugar, member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and its former Chair, put it in 1993, NATO needed to 'go out of area or go out of business' (Medcalf 2008: 67).

A further factor that made enlargement more likely was an under-appreciation of the challenges of Russia's transition. Unlike the smaller 'captive nations' who had communism imposed upon them, Russia faced complete political and economic transition and a post-imperial and post-great power transition. Analysts including Mansfield and Snyder (1995), Offe (1996), Dawisha and Parrot (1997), McFaul (1997-98), Motyl (1998), White (1998), Cohen (1998), Snyder (1998), Barnett (1998) and Sakwa (1999) have detailed the challenges of democratic transition and the unique challenges Russia faced. These challenges included political reform across the world's largest state with almost no history of democracy, extreme economic difficulties, secessionist aspirations and threats to ethnic Russians in other CIS states. It was in Russia that the Soviet Union originated and where socialism had the longest history and greatest societal acceptance, with significant elements resistant to reform, highlighted by Zhirinovskiy's electoral success in the 1993 parliamentary elections (Umland 1997; McFaul 1997: 8-9; White 1998: 142-146; Pipes 1997: 69-71).

As noted, US elites recognised that Russia was important and also, at least rhetorically, accepted that Russia's transition would be uneven. In April 1993 Clinton correctly noted that Russia was undertaking:

Three fundamental changes at once: moving from a Communist to a market economy; moving from a tyrannical dictatorship to a democracy; and moving to an independent nation state away from having a great empire. And these are very difficult and unsettling times (Clinton 1993).

The 1994 *National Security Strategy* accepted that 'Russia's future is uncertain' (White House 1994: iii), whilst the 1995 version recognised that 'Russia's historic transformation will proceed along a difficult path' (White House 1995: v). Holbrooke publicly outlined that Russia's transformation would be 'painful' and that



Russia is 'bound to experience' ups and downs for possibly decades (Holbrooke 1995: 68).

However, the exceptional difficulties were under-appreciated meaning that many, across the political spectrum, had disproportionate expectations for Russia's evolution and behaviour. Actors subsequently underestimated the impact of NATO enlargement, and were excessively critical of, or threatened by, negative Russian actions or lack of democratic progress. For instance, the White House suggested in 1997 that NATO enlargement and the NATO-Russia Founding Act would 'increase the likelihood that Russia will continue on its path of democratic and peaceful development' and argued that 'it is unlikely that NATO reform will undermine Russian reform or strengthen Russian hard-liners' (Arms Control Association September 1997).

While many Russia-experts urged against enlargement, many other analytical elites under-appreciated the potential impact of enlargement. In 1993 Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee from RAND suggested that while it was important not to make Russia feel threatened, it was, in the context of NATO enlargement, 'hard to understand how supporting democracy and stability in Eastern Europe can undercut democracy in Russia' (Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee 1993: 37). In February 1998 Ariel Cohen of The Heritage Foundation suggested that fears that enlargement could disrupt US-Russia ties were 'unfounded', arguing that Russia needed the West, that the Western media overemphasised anti-NATO sentiment in Russia and that Russian anti-NATO feelings 'are not widespread' (Cohen 1998). Such assumptions persisted despite frequent warnings concerning the likely Russian reaction to enlargement and the potential impacts in Russia from Russian politicians and commentators (Veliichkin 1995; Trenin 1996; Parkhalina 1997; Woehrel 1998; Granville 2000). This contributed to the White House, on more than one occasion, being shocked by Russian criticism. Goldgeier (1999: 87) describes the administration's surprise at Russia's refusal to sign the NATO-Russia Individual Partnership Programme.

Stephen F. Cohen (1998) argued that US policy towards Russia in the 1990s was based on fundamental misconceptions and unrealistic expectations, not least that most of the major obstacles to liberal democracy and Western capitalism were gone (see also Bonner 1993). Similarly, Lieven (1999: 9) notes that many in the United States saw a monolinear path for all the former communist states. This was reinforced by a triumphalism that, as outlined, saw, democracy as a natural and inevitable endpoint – articulated by Fukuyama's (1992) argument that liberal-democracy marked the end of history and triumph of the Western idea.

Consequently, as scholars such as Lieven (1998), Pipes (1997: 78) and Waltz (2000: 30) highlight, US approaches towards Russia were frequently understood in Moscow as confrontational, such as NATO naval exercises with Ukraine in the Black Sea and messages to Ukraine to prepare itself for NATO membership by 2010, or tokenistic. While post-1991 euphoria understandably clouded judgements, Cox (2000b: 265) argues that Clinton's advisors should have, by 1992, predicted that Russia's transition would be more difficult than originally envisioned. Similarly, in his analysis of Russia's economic breakdown, corruption and the 'criminalization of the Russian state', Ermarth argues that the threats of crime and corruption posed by Russian reform were clear but that 'neither American intelligence analysis nor American policymakers adequately appreciated the crime and corruption problem' (Ermarth 1999). This was partly, he argues, because US officials wore 'intellectual blinders' and ignored Russia's unique context – subsequently 'overlooking the darker sides of Russian realities' (Ermarth 1999).

Indeed, the administration's early support for Yeltsin was often blinded by assumptions about a positive Russian trajectory meaning that, alongside long-standing experience of dealing with Soviet leaders rather than institutions, the administration was, as Cohen (1998: 243) notes, surprisingly uncritical of some of Yeltsin's policies. In 1998 Simes criticised the Clinton administration for having backed Yeltsin's 'radical reform at any cost', subsequently having 'endorsed' the unconstitutional dissolution of parliament, shelling of the Russian White House and ever increasing presidential powers (Simes 1998: 12). Dobriansky (2000: 139-140)

accuses Clinton of supporting a small group of 'pro-US' Russian politicians which contributed to a failure to tackle corruption and cronyism in Russia. Indeed, declassified documents reveal e-mails in 1999 between White House staff preparing notes for a Clinton-Yeltsin phone conversation warning against being 'too negative' (Weiss 1999). As early as 1993 Clinton confidently described relations with Russia as a 'new democratic partnership' (Clinton 1993a). The following year the *National Security Strategy* described Russia economic transformation as 'one of the great historical events of the century' (White House 1994: 23).

Overall, there were factors encouraging NATO to adapt, particularly the need to maintain NATO's relevance, but this was not time critical, with no large scale threats to the region and Russia's transition being of prime importance to wider US objectives.

## **Ideational Legacy 1: NATO Enlargement as a Means to Consolidate Cold War Ideological Victory**

### ***Introduction***

Despite this context, NATO enlargement was concluded at a rapid pace and driven, in large part, by the United States. The US position on enlargement was influenced by three specific Cold War ideational legacies. The first of these was the view that NATO, understood to have kept the peace in Western Europe, was a mechanism for extending political values across a united Europe in order to consolidate ideological and geopolitical Cold War victory. This legacy was based on the interpretation of the Cold War's end as victory for democracy and US values, validating their superiority and universality. This was particularly so in Europe, where the Cold War had begun and was the centre of geopolitical competition. Whilst overwhelming US power provided a favourable context, such pro-active and entangling commitments to democratisation had been possible previously whilst the United States also had the option of disengaging from Europe (Larsen 2013). The ambition in the 1990s was specifically influenced by the Cold War-informed assumptions that democracy had a now proven global applicability, that there was a 'new Europe' and that the spread of democracy would increase US security. These assumptions influenced a view that

enlargement represented a logical continuation, and ultimately fulfilment, of US Cold War policy towards Europe - consolidating ideological victory.

### ***Cold War Influences***

Four Cold War influences were particularly relevant for this legacy. The first was addressed in Chapter Two and is the reinforcement that Cold War experiences and narratives provided to historical notions that democracy and US values are exceptional and universal. As set out in that chapter, the Cold War was widely understood as a global ideological battle and there was a common understanding that Cold War victory was validation of democracy and the US model. These narratives were further entrenched as part of the political culture by the creation or adaption of organisations during the Cold War that reinforced narratives of the US political model as superior and universal. For example, Freedom House developed into a tool to undermine the Soviet model. As Tsygankov and Parker (2015: 91) note, the organisation's slogan, 'United States: country of freedom' made clear the moral and political superiority afforded to the US political system. The organisation's annual ratings of other states' political systems held them against a US model. Radio Free Europe (RFE), Radio Liberty (RL), Human Rights Watch and NED all reinforced the narrative of spreading universal values.

The second Cold War influence was the perception of the Cold War's end as the geopolitical unification of Europe. There were three specific aspects to this. Firstly, as Hogan (1982: 268) and Ludlow (2010: 179) note, although the US idea of Europe as a single political and economic entity predates the Cold War, it was only with the Cold War that Europe's political structure became a sustained and prominent US policy concern. This was seen as the best way to promote European stability, prevent Soviet subversion and plan for Germany's future (Hogan 1982: 272; Schwabe 1998: 37-80; Larres 2009:153; Brimmer 2007: 9-11). As Marshall outlined in 1947, the United States wanted Europe 'to overcome national barriers' and this was attempted in three ways (Foot 1990: 83). The first was economic and military support for Western European to secure the survival of the democratic, free-market model and avoid another fracturing of Europe. This included the Marshall Plan, which provided

over \$12 billion to the rebuilding of Western Europe, NATO and stand-alone initiatives, such as a US working capital loan to the European Coal and Steel Community, which was understood as essential to rebuilding national infrastructures (Hillstrom 2005: 277). As noted, this was influenced by perceptions of Soviet threat. During WWII (and immediate post-war period) American elites were split about supporting European integration but the Soviet threat swung opinion almost unanimously towards supporting European integration – referred to as the ‘United States of Europe’ by many US policy-makers (Rappaport 1981; Lundestad 1998). Reflecting on events in 1952, Acheson, recalled that, ‘American interest and effort in Europe on the scale of the past six years depended on the continuance in Europe of policies designed to create a community united politically and strong economically and militarily’ (Acheson 1969: 708).

The idea of greater European integration as a means for peace continued throughout the 1950 and 1960s (Winand 1993; Giauque 2000: 95; Guderzo 2004). Eisenhower’s statement that ‘the problem of security demands closer cooperation among the nations of Europe’ is an example of this common narrative (Eisenhower 1953b). As Larres (1990, 2009) and Lundestad (1998a) highlight, support for integration was strongest prior to the 1970s when economic competition complicated matters. Overall however, it was, as Rappaport notes, the ‘first time a major power had fostered unity rather than discord among nations in a part of the world where it had significant interests’ (Rappaport 1981: 121. See also, Duchene 1994). While the concept became less unifying following the Soviet collapse (Ingimundarson 2000), policy-makers highlighted continuities and the narrative remained prominent in foreign policy discourse. Risse-Kapen (1996), Braun (2007) and Hitchcock (2010) argue that US support for integration across the Cold War and the collective experience of NATO contributed to the development of a collective identity – the West. The narrative remained at the end of the Cold War. Bush set out in 1991 that the ‘United States has been, is, and will remain an unhesitating proponent of the aim and process of European integration’ (Department of State 1991).

The second aspect of the Cold War influence concerned with the geopolitical unification of Europe was US effort during the Cold War to promote reform in the Soviet satellite states and, to a lesser degree, non-Russian states within the USSR. Despite little US appetite to use military force to secure freedoms in Eastern Europe following WWII, scholars during and following the Cold War have recognised US-Soviet tensions over CEE as an important factor in the Cold War's origins (LaFaber 1967; David 1974; Mark 1981). Policy planning staff strategised means to encourage and exploit tension between the USSR and Eastern European governments, with declassified documents detailing the intention to 'foster a heretical drifting-away process on the part of the satellite states' in Eastern Europe (Gaddis 2005: 45; National Security Council 18 August 1948). RFE, conceived of by the State Department and Office of Policy Coordination, began broadcasting in 1950 to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania and RL three years later in sixteen languages across the Soviet Union. The organisations provided news and gave voice to Warsaw Pact dissidents promoting evolutionary change of local systems (RFE/RL 2008). Epstein (2005: 79) highlights that, of NATO members, it was the United States that insisted on funding dissident movements in Central Europe. Policy-makers maintained pressure for change through public criticism. As Davis (1974: 4) notes, John Foster Dulles periodically called for the liberation of the Eastern European states. Captive Nations week was signed into law in 1959 to highlight Soviet oppression. Reagan's address at the United Nations in 1985 was typical of the high-profile public condemnation of Soviet policy towards Europe, stating that 'nothing can justify the permanent division of the European continent' and promising to propose solutions to the Soviet leadership (Reagan 1985b). The United States, to a limited degree, sought to shape Soviet policy towards the CEE, such as imposing sanctions on Moscow and Poland following the martial law crackdown on Solidarity in 1981. Matlock reports that he delivered and translated a strongly-worded, private letter from Bush to Gorbachev in 1991, warning that US cooperation would cease in several areas if the violence in the Baltic states continued (Matlock 2015).

Finally, the breakaway of the satellite states were widely framed as CEE moving towards the West. Declassified documents demonstrate that it was hoped that a

united Western Europe would undermine Soviet influence in Europe and contribute to the integration of CEE into Western Europe (for examples see, *FRUS* 1955: 349; Kennan's comments in *FRUS* 1948: 177). The United States funded reform in the region, including Support for East European Democracy Act (SEED) of 1989 which was designed to promote democracy and free markets (Epstein, Serafino and Miko 2007: 28-29). In 1989 Bush spoke of 'a whole Europe, a free Europe' (Bush 1989c) and the 1991 *National Security Strategy* listed the ambition of bringing about 'reconciliation, security and democracy in a Europe whole and free' (White House 1994: 4). NATO's London Declaration described the region as 'choosing a Europe whole and free' and argued that 'in the new Europe, the security of every state is inseparably linked to the security of its neighbours' (NATO 1990). Commentators urged the region's integration into the West (for example, Sachs 1990).

The third Cold War influence was NATO's political origins. Despite the continued primacy of security objectives in NATO, political objectives became increasingly significant over the course of the Cold War. Despite the Atlantic Charter containing normative principles, NATO's fourteen binding treaty articles make no reference to democracy, as Reither (2001: 52) notes, and there was no stipulation that a member had to be democratic or that NATO would advance democracy. Indeed, Cold War enlargement incorporated Turkey, Greece and Spain, all of which had only emerging democracies or suffered setbacks (Carothers 1981; Smith, Mark 2000; Reither 2011: 57-58). As scholars such as Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee (1995, 12) and Angelov (2004) have noted, criteria for membership was largely limited to whether a new state served the strategic interests of the West. Nevertheless, the Washington Treaty's introduction outlined a commitment to 'safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law' whilst Article II focused on strengthening free institutions (NATO 1949). Senior US officials, including Truman (1949a, 1949b) and Acheson (1949) used the narrative of a democratic alliance heavily when outlining the purpose of NATO domestically. The *Harmel Report* in 1967 broadened the alliance's approach to security, placing greater emphasis on moving towards stable relationships in order to address underlying political tensions (NATO 1967). This report provided a precedent for NATO adapting to changed circumstances. The

London Declaration of 1990 set out NATO's role as 'an agent of change' across a 'more united continent, supporting security and stability with the strength of our shared faith in democracy' (NATO 1990). NATO's *New Strategic Concept* in 1991 reinforced the link between ideology and conflict by praising the former Warsaw Pact members for democratic reforms and declaring that the 'political division of Europe that was the source of military confrontation of the Cold War period has thus been overcome' (NATO 1991). As such, despite some practices that suggested otherwise, NATO members defined NATO's identity in political terms, focused on common democratic values and aims, and this became more pronounced as the Cold War developed.

The final Cold War influence was the increased connection between democracy and peace in the minds of US policy-makers that occurred across the Cold War. The institutionalisation of democracy promotion (and Democratic Peace Theory) is set out in the following chapter but an aspect relevant to this legacy was the growing view that democracy and security were linked. As outlined, this was a feature of US-Soviet relations. This perception was reflected in early Cold War documents and policies that structured over-arching doctrine for the remainder of the Cold War. Marshall assessed that working economies were needed to 'permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist', arguing that without this there could be 'no political stability and no assured peace' (Marshall 1945). Acheson outlined that without aid to secure economic and political stability 'freedom and democracy could not long survive' meaning 'no lasting peace or prosperity for any of us' (Acheson 1947: 992). Truman warned Congress that if the United States failed to support free states then 'we may endanger the peace of the world – and we shall surely endanger the welfare of our own nation' (Truman 1947b). NSC 68 set out that the United States had to 'lead in building a successfully functioning political and economic system in the free world' based on the assumption that relations between free states were peaceful (National Security Council 1950: 7-9). As Risse-Kappen (1996: 375) notes, these Cold War declarations made a liberal interpretation of the Soviet threat and narratives of democracy and security were boosted by the end of the Cold War.



### *Increased Political Role of NATO*

The political framing of NATO's purpose during enlargement debates is one example of the way in which enlargement was viewed as a means to consolidate Cold War ideational victory. Actors, particularly liberal-leaning actors, presented enlargement as a tool to spread democracy and values, now seen as universal, across Europe. As scholars such as Angelov (2004) and Barany (2004) outline, enlargement was considered to promote and secure democracy in three ways: encouraging political reform to satisfy NATO membership expectations (primarily strengthened civilian control of militaries); deterring attack on democratic member states; and allowing members, because of their sense of security, to focus on political reform and peaceful resolution of tensions. This was reflected in NATO documents. NATO's *Study on Enlargement*, for example, reflected the 'Perry Principles', in which democracy was one of the four principles of NATO (Perry 1995). While avoiding fixed criteria for membership, the document set out expectations of new members - the first being to conform to the principles of 'democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law' (NATO 1995b).

Consolidating Cold War ideological victory was the most dominant rationale for enlargement provided by the administration and liberal analytical elites during the 1990s, particularly during the early and mid-1990s. Actors explicitly framed enlargement to spread democracy as a continuation of Cold War policy and consolidation of Cold War achievements. In 1994 Clinton asserted that 'history calls on us again to help consolidate freedom's new gains' (Clinton 1994b) and the following year that building a democratic Europe through enlargement would 'build upon President Truman's accomplishments' (Clinton 1995a). As part of an address to the UK parliament in November 1994, Clinton described NATO as 'the sword and shield of democracy', arguing that it could help the states that 'once lay behind the iron curtain to become a part of a new Europe' (Clinton 1995d). The 1995 *US National Security Strategy* described NATO as 'a guarantor of European democracy [...] its mission endures even though the Cold War has receded into the past' (White House 1995: 26). In 1995 Holbrooke described enlargement as the 'logical and

essential consequence of the disappearance of the Iron Curtain and [the] need to widen European unity based on shared democratic values' (Holbrooke 1995: 42) and argued that enlargement would extend 'freedom's victory to all of Europe' (Holbrooke 1995: 59).

In 1996 Clinton reflected that America's commitment to democracy, including initiatives such as NATO had, 'helped to win the Cold War' and suggested that those values were 'more and more the ideals of humanity' (Clinton 1996). As such, he reasoned, NATO needed to reach out to the new democracies of Europe to ensure that the 'freedom [that] has been won [...] will not be lost again' (Clinton 1996). Similarly, Christopher (1996a) argued that NATO enlargement was a method for integrating Europe's new democracies. In 1997 Talbott sought to highlight NATO's Cold War ideological continuities, arguing that 'NATO has always had that political function and responsibility, including in its old, Cold War incarnation' (Talbott 1997). Albright warned Congress that failure to enlarge NATO would squander decades of containment that had the ultimate goal of enlarging the democratic community (Albright 1997b). In 1997 Hunter described enlargement as the opportunity to 'complete the work of the Marshall Plan, helping to build democratic, prosperous and secure societies across Europe – this time not cut off by an Iron Curtain' (Hunter 1997: 16-18). As Clinton explained in a letter to Congress in 1998:

By extending the underpinnings of security beyond the arbitrary line of the Cold War, NATO can strengthen democratic and free market reforms for all of Europe, just as it has done for Western Europe in the three decades since 1949 (in, Clinton 1998a: 195).

A NATO fact sheet produced by the State Department (1998a) described one of the four main reasons for enlargement as bolstering democratic trends in Central Europe. Describing NATO in the post-Cold War era as a 'true political-military alliance', Hunter suggested that the states working towards membership were pushed towards

democratisation and that this has the potential to distil into other areas of society (Hunter 1999, 194-195).

Although this narrative was particularly prominent amongst liberals, some right-leaning analytical elites shared this position. Joshua Muravchik, Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, argued that NATO's original members were partly motivated by a 'common democratic ethos' and suggested that enlargement could do the same for new members, - 'assuring stability by reinforcing democratic institutions' (Muravchik 1997: 35-36). James Anderson, then National Security Analyst at The Heritage Foundation, argued that enlargement would expand and 'consolidate 'the zone of peace and democracy in Europe' (Anderson 1998).

The notion that NATO would have a strong democratising impact was strongly influenced by Cold War assumptions about the post-Cold War era. As outlined, NATO was not designed to promote democracy and had not consistently conformed to democratic principles in terms of membership. Reither (2001), Brown (1999: 211) and Braun (2007: 64) argue that NATO did relatively little to promote democracy during the Cold War and that members failing to fulfil basic democratic standards were not held to account. Similarly, other factors that could have contributed to peace between democracies during the Cold War other than ideology, such as common interests (Thompson 1996; Gates, Knutsen and Moses 1996; Farber and Gowa 1997), featured far less prominently in enlargement debates. Although membership has had some limited success in encouraging democratisation in the post-Cold War era (Angelov 2004, Barany 2004, Epstein 2005) the evidence at the time to suggest this would be the case was limited and based heavily on assumption. As will be outlined below, there were other institutions potentially better suited to European democratisation.

*Perceptions of a new Geopolitical Reality: Europe Whole and Free*

As well as consolidating ideological victory by spreading democracy, NATO enlargement was also seen as a means to consolidate geopolitical victory in Europe and erase Cold War dividing lines – confirming a ‘new Europe’ as part of a united Europe in the ‘West’. Liberal and conservative elites recognised a ‘new Europe’ and depicted enlargement as a continuation of Cold War policy towards Europe and a logical response to the need to integrate CEE to consolidate Cold War victory. Sakwa (2014: 161-162) notes that wider Europe is associated with 1989 and, as Hutchings (2009: 232) summarises, American visions for NATO intended to bring together the twin ambitions of a united Europe and a US-led security architecture. Such ambitions had not existed prior to the Cold War.

The administration regularly portrayed a new Europe as a direct consequence of the Cold War and that enlargement was a response to that and completion of Cold War goals of European unification. In 1997 Clinton argued that:

Now, the dawn of new democracies is lighting the way to a new Europe in a new century -- a time in which America and Europe must complete the noble journey that Marshall's generation began, and this time with no one left behind (Clinton 1997b).

In February 1997 Albright suggested that failing to enlarge would be a declaration that NATO does not ‘accept the geography of a new Europe’ and argued that NATO needed to focus on integration, with states across Europe seeking membership as part of their move to join ‘the West’ (Albright 1997a). PRD 36, which set out the administration’s policy towards CEE, outlined the ambition of ‘integration into the West’ (PRD36 1993: 6). In 1998 Clinton argued that:

The dream of the generation that founded NATO was of a Europe whole and free. But the Europe of their time was lamentably divided by the Iron Curtain. Our generation can realize their dream. It is our opportunity and responsibility to do so, to create a new

Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the very first time in all history (White House 1998a).

The perception of geopolitical victory and of the West was apparent across foreign policy elites, with influential bureaucrats and senators from both parties making the same argument about completing Cold War goals and reuniting a new Europe as part of the West. US General George Joulwan, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe until July 1997, stressed that Marshall's vision had included Eastern Europe, suggesting that enlargement was 'in line with Marshall's dream' and framed enlargement as 'a follow on to the events that occurred in 1989 and 1990' (Joulwan 1997: 20-21). Hunter argued that membership would be 'completing the work started half a century ago with the Marshall Plan and the creation of NATO' (Hunter 1997: 18). Republican Senator Susan Collins argued that with the end of the Cold War 'the meaning of "Europe" has changed' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3629). Senate Majority Leader and member of the Senate NATO Observer Group Trent Lott reflected the views of a significant number of Republican and Democrat Senators when telling the House that enlargement was 'natural extension of having won the cold war' whilst Senator Lieberman suggested that enlargement would be 'ratification of the end of the cold war' (US Congressional Record – Senate 27 April 1998a: S3605 & S3624).

Such narratives were reinforced by CEE leaders and analytical elites. Havel told Clinton during a meeting in April 1993 that the Czech people 'want to focus on entering NATO and the EC because we see ourselves as Europeans who embrace European values' (Havel 1993). Geza Jeszensjy, Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, warned NATO about the dangers of nationalism to 'the new Europe' (Jeszensky 1992). Vaclav Klaus, then Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, referred to a 'common history' of a 'Euro-American civilization' and argued that enlargement would 'consolidate democracy in Europe' and protect Western interests during a presentation at the Heritage Foundation (Klaus 1997). The Romanian Foreign Minister referred to Europe's liberation from communism as a return to the natural boundaries of Europe (Fierke and Wiener 1999: 729). Peter Rodman, Director of Eurasian Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

argued that the Central European states ‘consider themselves part of the West’ and urged their inclusion into NATO (Rodman 1994: 27). James Anderson of the Heritage Foundation emphasised that the ‘countries currently being considered for membership have deep historical and cultural ties to the West’ (Anderson 1998).

The narrative of consolidating geopolitical victory was particularly frequent in reference to erasing Cold War dividing lines. At a NATO Ministerial meeting Christopher framed enlargement as the expansion of the West. He argued that NATO should ‘bring Europe's new democracies fully, finally and forever into our transatlantic community’ and argued that enlarging NATO would:

Fulfil[led] the founding vision of NATO; this was the time we finished the half-century task of building a free and secure Europe, but this time with no divisions’ and urged that a ‘Cold War frontier should not be sustained (Christopher 1996b: 604).

At the signing ceremony of the NATO-Russia Founding Act in May 1997 Clinton described enlargement as the creation of ‘a peaceful, democratic, undivided Europe’ and the culmination of 50 years of work by his predecessors (Clinton 1997a). At the 1997 Madrid Summit Clinton referenced Eastern Europe’s Cold War struggles for freedom, including Budapest in 1956, Prague in 1968 and Gdansk in 1981, and argued that NATO enlargement would erase ‘an artificial line drawn across Europe by Stalin’ (Clinton 1997: 21). In October 1997 Albright warned the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that failure to enlarge would be ‘preserving the old Iron Curtain’ (Albright 1997b) Later that month she told the Senate Appropriations Committee, that America ‘waged the Cold War in part because these nations were held captive’ (Albright 1997c). White House documents outlined that one of the aims of enlargement was to ‘erase the old, artificial dividing line’, arguing that ‘a failure to enlarge would set Stalin’s dividing line in stone’ (Arms Control Association 1997). A State Department Fact Sheet listed one of the four primary

reasons for enlarging NATO as being to ‘erase Stalin’s artificial dividing line in Europe’ (US Department of State 1998b).

This narrative also featured as part of Senate debates. Senator Biden, co-Chair of the Senate NATO Observer Group and ranking minority member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, argued that failure to enlarge would ‘recreate Stalin’s immoral and artificial dividing line’ (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3639). Even for Republicans, most of whom criticised Clinton for favouring Russia ahead of the ‘captive nations’ (Grayson 1999: xiii), this narrative had particular resonance, often including moral considerations in relation to a perceived betrayal. Senator Helms, who as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee played a fundamental role in how enlargement ratification would be framed, in his support for enlargement referenced ‘the betrayal at Yalta which left millions of Europeans behind enemy lines. Today, with the expansion of the atlantics alliance we have an historic opportunity to right that wrong’ (US Senate Foreign Relations Committee 1997). Senator William Roth, a Senator since 1971, President of NATO’s parliament and co-Chair of the Senate NATO Observer Group, suggested that enlargement would eliminate the ‘immoral dividing lines imposed upon Europe by dictators of the past’ (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3643). Such was the strength of the dividing lines narrative Senator Robert Smith complained that the debates were in a Cold War ‘time warp’ (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3633).

The idea of the ‘West’, so important to Cold War framings, was synonymous with ideational victory. Harries (1993) argued that following the Cold War the ‘West’ was no longer a relevant political construct, having emerged in response to the Soviet threat and was not reflective of any significant concept of political unity despite common civilizational roots. The desire to move NATO eastwards, Harries argued, reflected an inability to reject old concepts. However, as Malksoo (2004: 285) and Risse-Kapen (1996: 396) set out, geopolitical communities are not defined solely by geography; they are, at least partly, imagined and defined by values as well as geography. CEE movement towards Western style political systems, alongside the experiences of seeking to promote change in the region during the Cold War, meant

that for many US elites there was no longer a 'core' and 'periphery' Europe, either strategically or in identity terms (Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee 1993: 37). As Risse-Kapen (1996: 396) suggests, rather than terminating the idea of the West, the end of the Cold War was understood as the extension of the community into Eastern Europe. This helped to guide what policies appeared to be 'common sense' and to produce a 'mental map' of Europe, defined by identity as well as geography (Malksoo 2004; Schimmelfenning 1998: 213-214). Scholars such as Kurth (1997: 561), Costigliola (1998) and Fierke and Weiner (1999) argue that NATO developed a specific Western identity during the Cold War, embedded through shared ideational norms. Enlargement thus offered a mechanism to consolidate a new perceived geopolitical reality and expand the political community of the 'West'. Pro-enlargement policy-makers, such as Talbott, argued that enlargement would 'bring Eastern and Central Europe into that community [the West]' (Fitchett 1997) whilst even critics of enlargement, such as Kupchan, argued that 'Central Europe belongs in the West' (Kupchan 1996: 98).

These attitudes were reflected in NATO documents, which emphasised that enlargement would support the objective of an undivided Europe. A NATO *communiqué* in May 1995 'reaffirmed [our] commitment to work for a peaceful, secure, stable and undivided Europe' (NATO1995a). The *Study on NATO Enlargement* detailed the ambition to ensure enlargement contributed to the security of the 'entire Euro-Atlantic area' (NATO 1995b). The press release following a meeting of the North Atlantic Council Defence Ministers in December 1996 noted that the alliance's 'fundamental objective remains the creation of a Europe whole and free' (NATO 1996b). The *Madrid Declaration* in July 1997 expressed NATO's 'commitment to an undivided Europe' and asserted that a 'new NATO is developing: a new NATO for a new and undivided Europe' (NATO 1997). Perceptions of a new geopolitical reality that was shaped not only by geography but by ideational conceptions of community and shared values was a common narrative within the United States and Europe and contributed to the perceived logic of enlargement to consolidate geopolitical Cold War victory.



### *Democracy and NATO in Europe: Promoting US Security*

As outlined, Cold War experiences convinced many foreign policy elites that democracy kept the peace and one of the key drivers of US support for democratic states during the Cold War was to enhance US security. NATO was portrayed as a community of peaceful democracies that resolved differences without violence. This Cold War-reinforced assumption about democracy and security was clear in US arguments concerning enlargement. Policy-makers outlined that spreading democracy through enlargement was intended to enhance US security by producing peace across Europe, as it was perceived to have done for Western Europe during the Cold War. The administration emphasised that this was a continuation of Cold War policy. Clinton (1994b), discussing NATO enlargement in 1994, listed one reason for supporting enlargement as the security of the former communist states mattering to US security. When addressing CEE leaders Clinton (1994c) stated that while support for enlargement was driven by shared values, it also arrived from the assessment that security in their states was important to US security. In 1995 Christopher summarised the administration's view that 'democratic nations are far less likely to go to war with each other' and, referencing Truman, Marshall and Acheson, argued that the policies forged during the Cold War remained the right policies for the post-Cold War era (Christopher 1995: 14-15&27).

In 1997 Talbott outlined that America wanted 'to do for the Central and East Europeans what we did for Western Europe; we want to finish the historic project we started in 1949 -- making war in Europe impossible' (Talbott 1997). Hunter suggested that the fifteen European NATO members had 'abolish[ed] war' between themselves (Hunter 1997: 16). Albright, in an argument that drew heavily on Cold War analogies and references to policy continuities from Vandenberg, asserted that Europe's military rivalries were 'broken only when NATO was born and only in the half of Europe NATO covered' and reasoned that enlargement would expand 'the area in Europe where wars simply do not happen' (Albright 1997b). These narratives

featured not only in public debates but bureaucratic documents (see: US State Department 1998a).

Democratic Senator Joe Biden described the ‘basic rationale of NATO enlargement’ as extending ‘a zone within which democracies do not fight with each other’ (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3641). Many influential Republicans shared this view, including in the Senate which had the power to ratify or block US support for enlargement. Senator Roth suggested, in 1997, that NATO enlargement was, ‘the surest means of doing for Central and Eastern Europe what American leadership through the alliance has done so well for Western Europe’ and, as such, enlargement would avoid America being pulled into a European war (Roth *et al.* 1997: 29). Senator Jon Kyl summarised common ground when stressing that:

Although this is a moral policy, it is not an entirely altruistic one. The freedom, prosperity, and security of Americans--our standard of living and our domestic civil liberties--all are enhanced and bolstered when this community of free nations grows bigger and stronger, especially when it does so in Europe, where our closest allies and our most profound interests are concentrated (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3623-S3624).

Describing European security as ‘indispensable to the security of the United States’, Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole argued that the ‘linchpin of US and European security is NATO’ and argued that ‘[s]table and secure democracies in Central Europe will be good for America’ (Dole 1996). He emphasised Cold War continuities, stating that ‘for fifty years, American statesmen from both parties--Democratic and Republican--have understood that the security of Europe is vital to the security of the United States’ (Dole 1996).

While European security had been important to the United States during the Cold War years, CEE security had been far less important prior to that, particularly

security related to domestic politics. As Davis (1974: 374-378&384) outlines, between 1941 and 1945 public opinion reports highlight very limited concern regarding the political future of the region, and the United States made little effort to observe elections or shape the local systems following WWII. While the State Department was concerned about balance of power in Europe, it did not see Eastern Europe as politically or militarily important. As Carpenter (1994) points out, CEE was only considered a vital US interests during the Cold War, its political status did not feature prominently in American strategic calculations prior to this. As such, arguments such as those expressed by Vice-President Gore that the 'security of states that lie between Western Europe and Russia affects the security of America' (Gore 1994), Albright that the region 'is so clearly important to our security' (Albright 1997b) and PRD 36 that the status of CEE will 'affect profoundly' the United States is a perception that developed only in the Cold War period (*PRD36* 1993:5). Warren Christopher's assertion that it was a US 'vital interest' that 'the nations of Central and Eastern Europe be strong, independent, democratic and secure' was directly informed by the Cold War (in, Hoell 1994: 16). As Holbrooke declared in 1995, 'democratic reform in this region is as important to US interests now as when the SEED Act was passed in 1989' (Holbrooke 1995: 69). Despite the fundamentally different context, the priorities remained the same for the region.

Overall, legacy one highlights that for many US elites NATO enlargement was a tool to consolidate ideological Cold War victory. The Soviet collapse validated narratives that democracy and US values had universal applicability. NATO enlargement was seen as a mechanism to encourage and protect democracy and to unite Europe by destroying Cold War-era dividing lines. This was understood not only as a liberal endeavour to consolidate the events of 1989 but also crucial to US security by securing peace in Europe based on the Cold War influenced, broadly bipartisan, assumption that democracies do not fight one another. The notion that the ideologies of Europe, particularly CEE, were a vital US interest was unique in American history and a consequence of Cold War experiences.

Ideational Legacy 2: NATO Enlargement to Reinforce US Leadership Identity

## *Introduction*

Whereas the first legacy centred primarily on Cold War-informed ideas about the international system, the second was based on US perceptions of America's identity and role in the world. As Chapter Two outlined, there was a strong narrative within US foreign policy circles that Cold War victory confirmed the United States as a unique state with a legitimised global leadership role. There was particular emphasis on the need to retain influence in Europe rather than return to a pre-World War II isolationist position. NATO had been a mechanism for US leadership during the Cold War and enlargement provided an on-going means of influence in Europe, reinforcement of a global leadership image and a mechanism for out of area actions. Admitting states that were pro-American and that regularly referred to US Cold War actions and policies when seeking NATO membership helped to secure US influence within NATO and to confirm the Cold War-forged identity as a global leader supporting democratising states. NATO enlargement provided the physical and symbolic tools to confirm the Cold War-era forged leadership role and identity.

## *Cold War Influences*

Building on the perceptions of national uniqueness and global leadership, there were three additional Cold War influences that were particularly relevant. The first was the experience of being the dominant Western power and subsequent interpretations of Cold War victory as vindication and necessity of a leadership policy. Whilst also influenced by WWII, it was during the Cold War, faced with Soviet expansionism, that US leadership and structured, binding overseas commitments, particularly in Europe, became formalised through policies and organisations such as the Marshall Plan, Truman Doctrine and NATO. As the works of Guinsburg (1982), Esthis (1978), Huntington (1991), Schlesinger (1995: 2-4) and Dunn (2005) highlight, despite having temporarily overcome historically isolationist positions towards Europe when US vital interests were threatened, this was nevertheless a significant shift from traditional isolationist impulses. As early as 1947 Dulles, backed by key Republicans, championed American leadership in Europe (Rappaport 1981: 123) whilst Kennan summarised the administration's view that it was compelled to show leadership in the face of the Soviet Union (Kennan 1947). This was reflected in

public expressions of America's global role, with successive presidents and policy-makers, including Johnson (see, Schmidt 2005: 8), Carter (US Department of State [accessed 11 November 2014]), Reagan (1979) and Shultz (1984), emphasising America's unique nature and leadership role. As Foster (1983) outlines, public opinion also shifted towards a more active US foreign policy during the Cold War. It was also during, and in reaction to, the Cold War that many international-facing organisations, bodies and industries were developed and expanded. These included organisations such as USAID, the NED (Scott and Steele 2005: 441; Carothers 1994: 125-126), the CIA (Jeffreys-Jones 1997: 21-25&36) and the military-industrial complex (Fallows 2002: 46-48). These bodies had an interest in sustained US international engagement and leadership and were created with the institutional origin of the Soviet Union as an enemy.

Despite domestic debates in the early 1990s concerning the US global role (Schlesinger 1995: 5-8; Posen and Ross 1996; Dumbrell 1999; Dunn 2005: 238-241), Cold War experiences persuaded many members of the US political elite, including Bush and Clinton, that the United States must continue to lead and was legitimised to retain a global leadership role. Many analytical elites, particularly neoconservatives and realists, also called for the US to maintain and enhance its leadership role throughout the 1990s (for examples, Huntington 1993b; Wallop 1995). As discussed in the next chapter, ideas of American exceptionalism have long been a dominant feature of US political discourse and this interpretation of the Cold War's end enhanced this but redirected it towards an active, leadership foreign policy.

The second Cold War influence, connected to the first but more specific, was extended competition for influence in, and engagement with, Europe - entrenching the idea of vital US interests in Europe. While also influenced by WWII, the Cold War was the first period where this view was reflected in long-term policy and contributed to a dominant view that isolationism from Europe was not an option. John Adams in 1776 (Shiriyayev 1995: 91), the Continental Congress in 1783 (Schmidt 2005: 8), the Neutrality Proclamation of 1793, Washington's Farewell

Address in 1796 (US Department of State [accessed 20 October 2014], Jefferson's Inaugural Address in 1801 and the Monroe Doctrine are examples of the consistent narratives and policies warning against entanglement in Europe in the early decades of American foreign policy. Davis and Lynn-Jones (1987: 24-25) note US reluctance to join both World Wars and that military involvement in WWII was preceded by savage domestic debate. Congress refused to ratify America's involvement in the League of Nations whilst, as Kaplan (1999: 7-28) outlines, in the immediate months after WWII, influential voices urged withdrawal from the world stage.

This changed dramatically with the Cold War. The Vandenberg Resolution, which passed the US Senate by 64 votes to 4 in June 1948, allowed the United States to join collective regional arrangements for national security, making US membership in NATO possible (US Senate Resolution 239, 80<sup>th</sup> 1948). Binding commitment to Europe was apparent in policy but also spending and public narratives. Whilst Carpenter (1990: 29-44) argues that US commitments to Europe through NATO exceeded original expectations, the commitment was nevertheless made and sustained. Record (1990: 113) suggests that at least half of US Cold War defence spending focused on the protection of Europe and by 1990 two out of every three American servicemen deployed overseas was based in Europe. Lundestad (1990: 77) outlines that from 1947 to 1960 the United States and agencies linked to Washington contributed more than \$1.4 billion to aid foreign steel makers, most of this going to Western Europe in the early years. Defence spending increased from approximately \$1billion in 1938 to approximately \$12billion by the war's end and overseas basing was strongly influenced by WWII. However, it was after 1950 that defence spending truly transformed, reaching \$50billion in three years, with Western Europe the clear priority (Lundestad, 1986: 265-266; for military spending see, Higgs 1998). These tangible changes were reflected in the way that policy-makers described US-European ties publicly and privately. Kennedy's statement that 'our security is inevitably tied up with the security of Europe. The United States cannot look forward to a free existence if Western Europe is not free' was typical of the Cold War view (*FRUS* 1961: 427). As Reagan summarised in 1988:

America did not come easily or willingly to the lesson of how closely America's peace and freedom are tied to Europe's. We had a tradition dating back to President Washington of avoiding permanent alliances [...] Soon we learned that the postwar was not to be as we, through all those years of fighting, had prayed it would be (Reagan 1988).

The final Cold War influence was the experience of NATO providing a mechanism for US influence in Europe. As Bee (2000: 156) notes, NATO had a political dimension and became the primary mechanism for US involvement and leadership in Europe (see also, Nerlich 1979). Indeed, Kaplan (1984) suggests that initial negotiations were strongly influenced by the US desire to have significant control of NATO. By the 1970s the United States had over 300,000 troops stationed on the territory of European NATO members (Gallis 1997). Following WWII US military bases in Europe, Canada and the North Atlantic fell from 506 in 1947 to 258 in 1949. With NATO's creation and growing intensity of the Cold War US military bases in Europe and the North Atlantic increased, with 446 by 1953 and 627 by 1988. In all other regions the number of US military bases reduced across this period (Baker 1990: table 1.2). This imposed significant financial burden and several scholars, such as Calleo (1987) and Tonelson (1990) argued that US influence through NATO was overstated or that spending on NATO contributed to a decline in relative US power. However, it nevertheless provided a degree of influence, at the very minimum, as Kappen-Risse (1996: 277) notes, through enhancing the legitimacy of American leadership.

As importantly, leadership of NATO was perceived by many within US foreign policy circles to provide the United States with influence. As a report by the Senate Subcommittee on Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad in 1970 outlined:

Overseas bases, the presence of elements of United States armed forces, joint planning, joint exercises, or excessive military assistance programs [...] all but guarantee some involvement by the United States in the internal affairs of the host government (in, Iadicola 2008: 13).

A Department of Defense report in 1989 made clear that forward deployments were crucial to US 'power projection' capabilities (US Department of Defense 1988: 41). Lundestad (1986:267) lists examples of US Cold War political and economic influence in Europe, including preventing British plans for the nationalisation of coal mines in Germany, writing the Greek application for aid and encouraging the Italian administration to remove the communists from government. US leadership of NATO was evident not only in terms of relative resource commitment, public narratives, military bases in Europe and dominance of NATO's internal structure but also in terms of strategic shifts. As Lundestad (1998b: 251) points out, Eisenhower's policy of massive retaliation was subsequently adopted by NATO as was Kennedy's concept of a flexible response, despite the scepticism of several European members. Goldgeier (1999: 17) suggests that during the Cold War the United States baulked at suggestions that there should be a greater role for a pan-European institution relative to NATO.

### *Maintaining and Enhancing Leadership in Europe*

#### *Narratives of US Leadership*

Several factors indicate that enlargement was partly motivated by the desire to confirm and fulfil the Cold War-forged leadership identity and role. The first was the widespread narrative regarding the importance of a dominant US role in the world. While material changes and relative power advantage were factors in an outward looking foreign policy (Waltz 2000), perceptions of identity were important. The administration frequently framed the position as a continuation of Cold War policy and consolidation of Cold War victory - in identity terms, a confirmation of the US role. Lake was clear that 'interests and ideals compel us not only to be engaged but



to lead' and that American 'leadership is sought and respected in every corner of the world' (Lake 1993). Describing how every president 'has followed in Harry Truman's footsteps in carrying forward America's leadership in the world' Clinton made the case for sustaining US leadership, in large part through NATO (Clinton 1995). Christopher reflected that 'American leadership is our principle and a central lesson of this century' and praised Truman, Marshall and Vandenberg, arguing that the 'same farsighted commitment to US leadership and engagement must guide our foreign policy today' (Christopher 1995: 6&8). The administration's submission letter to the Senate argued that ratification would demonstrate 'American engagement and leadership in transatlantic affairs' (Senate Treaty Doc.105-36 1998). Clinton hailed ratification as sending a message that American 'leadership for security on both sides of the Atlantic is strong', suggesting that the vote stood 'in the tradition of Harry Truman, George Marshall and Arthur Vandenburg' (White House 1998b). The perceived identity of America as a unique state and global leader was most obviously displayed by Albright's declaration that 'if we have to use force it is because we are Americans. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future' (in, Schmidt 2005: 8).

This self-identification was a core part of policy and planning documents. The 1993 *National Security Strategy* stated that 'our success at home will depend more – not less – on the same kind of global leadership we exercised throughout the second half of the twentieth century' (White House 1993: ii). The 1997 *Quadrennial Defence Review* outlined the intention to 'reaffirm our role as leader' (US Department of Defense 1997). In its 1997-2002 *Strategic Plan* the United States Information Agency emphasised the importance of utilising recent advances in communications to sustain 'international leadership' and conducting activities and programmes that aimed at 'reinforcing a foundation of trust in U.S. global leadership' (US Information Agency 1997). The 1997 *National Strategy for a New Century* clearly linked Cold War and post- Cold War US leadership and justified ongoing leadership as justified by America's unique values. It argued that the 'contemporary era was forged by steadfast American leadership over the last half century – through efforts such as the Marshall Plan, NATO, the United Nations and the World Bank' and advanced a programme designed to 'maintain American leadership' (White House

1997). It argued that America was ‘the only nation capable of providing the necessary leadership’, that the need for US leadership was ‘as strong as ever’ and that this leadership was underpinned by ‘the power of our democratic values and ideals’ (White House 1997). Foreign policy was often framed in these terms. Explaining US involvement in Bosnia, Clinton argued that ‘people all around the world are now looking to America for leadership, so let us lead. That is our responsibility as Americans’ (Asmus 2002: 23) and suggested involvement was essential, partly because ‘our leadership all over the world are [is] at stake’ (quoted in *New York Times*, 1995: 11). Anderson (1995: 350) demonstrates that other NATO members also questioned US and NATO credibility if the United States was not involved. As Albright put it, the administration recognised the ‘imperative of continued US world leadership’ (in, Schwarz 1997: 24).

Influential Republicans frequently echoed the importance of continuing the Cold War policy of leadership, for example the GOP’s *Contract with America*, announced in 1994 and committed to maintaining US credibility around the world (Gingrich et al. 1994). Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole, in June 1996, promised that he would ‘consolidate our Cold War victory in Europe’ and argued that ‘the hope of the world still rests, as it has throughout this century, on American leadership’ (Dole 1996). Indeed, a failure to exert US leadership was one of the key arguments of Clinton’s critics (Fletcher 1994). Analysts suggested that the enlargement vote would be seen as indicator of the future US role in the world and politicians appear to have factored this into their considerations (Kitfield 1997). Urging colleagues to support enlargement, Lugar suggested that the vote would:

Be seen as a sign of whether America intends to maintain its international leadership role, or whether, after the end of the Cold War, the United States intends to retreat and relinquish its status as the world leader (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3620).

A bipartisan group of former Senators lobbying for enlargement emphasised that the world ‘watches for a sign of American leadership. To hesitate would send a signal that the US role in the world has begun to drift’ (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3606). The House voted in support of the *NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act* by 353:65, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee backed enlargement by 16-2 while the full Senate voted 80:19 in favour. These figures, although influenced by a range of factors, reflected the bi-partisan shift towards binding foreign engagement and active US leadership.

Think-tanks, particularly conservative ones, lobbied for a policy of sustained leadership and linked this policy to the Cold War. Kim R. Holmes, then Distinguished Fellow at The Heritage Foundation, accused Clinton of eroding US credibility and warned that policies needed to change to avoid America’s global influence shrinking (Holmes 1995). Urging the Clinton administration to ensure America remained military strong and engaged as a global power, Baker Spring, a Research Fellow at The Heritage Foundation, argued in 1996 that the absence of World Wars and few major wars since 1945 was a consequence of America’s emergence as ‘leader of the West’, concluding that the ‘lesson of history is [was] clear’: America needed to retain its global power role (Spring 1996). In 1997 Mickey Edwards and Stephen J. Solarz, of The Brookings Institute, urged the administration to reverse budget cuts on foreign assistance and diplomacy in order for the United States ‘to provide the global leadership that our national interests require’ (Edwards and Solarz 1997). In the same year Richard N. Haass, also of Brookings, argued that the United States needed to ‘continue its leadership role’ (Haass 1997).

Perceptions of US leadership and identity were especially pronounced in relation to Europe, where the discourse had two additional elements. Firstly, as noted above, the political unity between the United States and Europe, often identified as ‘the West’, and, secondly, a paternalism – both of which dictated the need for US engagement. Holbrooke argued that America was now a ‘European power’ and American involvement as necessary in the new era ‘as it was during the Cold War’ (Holbrooke 1995: 38-39). Albright told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, ‘let us not

deceive ourselves. The United States is a European power' (Albright 1997b). Hunter, suggested that the United States had 'long since become a European power' (Hunter 1997: 15). Secondly, as Stephen F. Cohen (1998: 244) suggested, the Cold War fostered a view that Europe was incapable of securing its own security without US guidance. As Senator Biden suggested:

Europeans have proven themselves to be incapable, if left to themselves, of settling their differences peacefully. The United States, it seems to me, must continue leading the new security architecture for that continent for, if we don't, I don't know who will (Roth *et al.* 1997: 30).

This view was common. On separate occasions Holbrooke argued that 'Europe cannot maintain stability on its own' (Holbrooke 1995: 60) and that 'Europe does not seem capable of taking decisive action in its own theatre' (Gallis 2001: 72).

### *United States the Lead NATO State Promoting Enlargement*

Another factor suggesting that confirming a leadership role was a motivation for enlargement is that, as Carpenter (1994), Rubenstein (1998: 37), and Braun (2007: 18) suggest, the United States was the NATO member most actively pursuing and leading enlargement. Almost all major decisions regarding enlargement were made in Washington. The United States proposed enlargement, developed PfP, promoted a two-track enlargement policy and decided which states would join in the first round. As Goldgeier (1999: 57) notes, it was the American General John Shalikashvili and his staff that developed the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF), in part to thwart any potential French efforts to turn the Western European Union (WEU) into a more dominant European security force. Congress passed the *NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act* in July 1996 (353:65 and 81:16 in the two houses) which authorised the administration to provide \$60 million to support Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic prepare for potential membership (CRS.1830, 1996). The Act was

modified from its draft form to include reference to US leadership in PfP (Sub-Committee on NATO Enlargement and the New Democracies 1996). Solomon (1997: 15-15) outlines that no European parliament in NATO matched Congress's activity, passed annual legislation to support enlargement or, other than Germany and Denmark, consistently matched the US advocacy for enlargement. In 1994 German Defense Minister Volker Ruhe conceded that of existing NATO members only Germany and the United States were 'enthusiastic' about enlargement (Clark 1994: 2). Asmus described most Europeans as 'lukewarm at best' (Asmus 2002: xxiv), whilst Kean and Binnendijk (1997: 2) highlighted that there were doubts that states including Italy and Holland would support enlargement because of their concerns for the implications with Russia.

That enlargement was partly a means to confirm US influence is further implied by the rapid pace at which the United States moved, something that often concerned other NATO members. One European diplomat noted that 'like everyone else, we assumed PfP would last for a decade at least, and Clinton took us by surprise' (Lieven 1998: 144). A French official complained that the United States was seeking to shift its role in NATO 'from leadership to hegemony' (Erlanger 1997: 6). Even the German representative to NATO complained that Washington was 'riding roughshod over its allies' and presenting NATO with accomplished facts instead of consulting with them' (Whitney 1995: 6). European Commission president Jacques Delors described America's approach as 'premature and ill-timed' (Goldgeier 1999: 85). US policy-makers were aware of European concerns, with a Congressional Research Service (CRS) report outlining that some NATO governments 'have expressed little enthusiasm for enlargement' (Gallis 1997). Despite this, the administration pressed forwards, with Republicans even urging faster enlargement and criticising Clinton for showing insufficient appreciation for America's global leadership role (Dole 1996). This commitment to enhancing engagement with Europe, in Hunter's words, 'reflected well-learned lessons of the twentieth century [...] America's strategic presence on the continent has become a settled historical question' (Hunter 1999: 191).

### *NATO Ahead of the European Union*

As outlined, the US position on enlargement was partly influenced by the ambition to promote democratisation. However, that other organisations could potentially have served this political function more effectively than a military alliance suggests that the promotion of NATO partly reflected a desire to secure US leadership in the region. Despite US policy-makers' assertions that it was axiomatic that NATO must remain Europe's principle security organisation, many analysts, including Brown (1995), Lepgold (1995), Davies (1995), Garnham (1995), Kupchan (1996), Clemons Jnr (1997), Hanson (1998), Perlmutter (2001) have argued that the EU, OSCE or WEU would be better suited to manage Europe's political evolution or small regional conflicts. However, as many scholars have outlined (Carpenter 1995: 1&6; Lundestad 1998: 168; Duffield 1994-95: 785; Brown 1999: 217) NATO was the only significant institutional instrument for the United States to assert its influence in Europe. Some NATO members, particularly France, argued that primacy should be given to European institutions but the United States (and others, including the UK) argued forcibly against this (Brown 1999: 204; Landsford 1999; Gallis 1997). As the Yugoslavian wars demonstrated, there were limitations to the other organisations (Borawski 1996; Kelleher 1995; Anderson 1995; Germond 2009), whilst the official US position was that NATO enlargement was complementary to other pan-European structures (Clinton 1994b; Holbrooke 1995; Christopher 1996a, US Department of State 1997; US Department of State 1995). However, some NATO member states accused the United States of creating competition between NATO and the EU and viewed US criticism as an effort to assure US influence (Gallis 1997). There appears to be some credibility in such claims, with US policy-makers, bureaucrats and analytical elites all referencing the unique US status in NATO as part of the rationale for maintaining NATO as Europe's pre-eminent organisation. Indeed, Boys (2015: 143) suggests that US officials sought to utilise NATO as the US 'organization of choice' for US foreign policy where it could control decision making without fear of sanction, as US power became diluted in the UN.

Pentagon planning documents from 1992 emphasised that, 'we must seek to prevent the emergence of European-only security arrangements that would undermine

NATO, particularly the Alliance's integrated command structure' (US Department of Defense 1992), whilst in 1997 State Departments officials advised that delaying NATO enlargement until the EU expanded further would be 'unwise' because, in part, 'it would diminish America's voice' (US Department of State 1997: 31). Christopher, in 1995, noting that NATO would 'remain the anchor of American engagement in Europe', argued that was 'why we must keep it strong, vital and relevant' (Christopher 1995: 19). John R. Schmidt, who headed the State Department's NATO Office and served as NSC NATO Director, later reflected that the United States had 'no desire to abandon the primary instrument through which it exercised influence in Europe' and recalled concerns in Washington that the EU could become a competitor to NATO' (Schmidt 2006: 93-94). Indeed, the US Ambassador to NATO between 1993 and 1998 revealed that there was no formal relationship between the NATO and the EU, no coordination of work in central Europe or with Russia and that there was 'no direct consultation even on enlargement' (Hunter 1999: 203).

Influential senators from both parties championed NATO enlargement to sustain US influence in Europe. Lugar, stressed that 'NATO is the organization in which the United States is involved and in which we offer leadership, not the European Union', warning that NATO needed to find solutions to Europe's problems or Europeans would 'deal with these problems either in new alliances or on their own' (in, Carpenter 1994: 153). Biden reminded colleagues that:

We are not a member of the EU. To suggest that, before we could consider membership in NATO, it has to be decided by the EU whether or not they can join essentially takes us out of the game (US Congressional Record – Senate 27 April 1998: S3642).

Helms emphasised that effectively giving the EU a veto on NATO membership 'would be nothing less than the abdication of American leadership in Europe' (Helms 1998). This broadly bipartisan view was encapsulated in a Senate Executive

Report giving advice and consent to enlargement that included the declaration that NATO ensures ‘an ongoing and direct leadership role for the United States in European security affairs’ (Senate Executive Report 105-14, 105<sup>th</sup>, 1998).

EU enlargement would have been a slower process and, as noted, both the OSCE and EU had weaknesses. However, US objections to those organisations playing a leading role may have been partly tactical. Negotiations had begun for EU accession for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, and all three were making steps towards democracy, PfP arrangements were in place and there was no significant short to medium term threat to the region (Lynch Allen C. 1997: 89; Reither 2001: 59-65; Germond 2009). By the late 1990s all three states were rated as ‘Free’ by Freedom House (Freedom House 1999) and Polity IV found similar trends (Polity IV [accessed 7 November 2014]). NATO membership thus had no basis for urgency. Indeed, if the main purpose was democratisation, rapid NATO enlargement as the primary mechanism had several flaws. As Kupchan (2000: 128), Mandelbaum (1995) and Rubinstein (1998: 39) all note, for states emerging from socialism, NATO membership diverted resources from social and economic reform to adapting national militaries. NATO documents reveal that between 1996 and 2001 Poland increased its defence budget by half a billion dollars, Hungary’s defence budget almost doubled between 1997 and 2001 whilst the Czech defence budget rose from \$869 million in 1996 to \$1.14 billion in 2001 (Price 2004). Whilst membership could mean a smaller proportion of national spending on defence long-term, in the short to medium term, a crucial period to successful political transition, it did not.

### *Enhancing US Influence and Interests Through Enlargement*

Enlargement was also considered necessary to secure US leadership within NATO. Analysts have noted how US military superiority in NATO translates into dominance of political decisions (Hutchings 2009: 9237; Brown 1999: 217) and this was a clear consideration for US actors. During the course of the 1990s, despite wanting allies to share more of the resource burden, the United States was committed to maintaining its leadership role in NATO. The 1997 *Quadrennial Defense Review* assessed that



maintaining 100,000 US troops in Europe would affirm 'US leadership in NATO' as the alliance prepared to enlarge (US Department of Defense 1997). The 1997 *National Security Strategy* stated the ambition of 'preserve[ing] U.S. influence and leadership in NATO' (White House 1997). The final Senate ratification of NATO accession protocols included amendment 2310, which stated that:

The United States maintains its leadership role in NATO through the stationing of United States combat forces in Europe, providing military commanders for key NATO commands, and through the presence of United States nuclear forces on the territory of Europe (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998c, 5670)

That, during the period of enlargement discussions, the United States spent forty five percent more on defence than the rest of NATO combined highlights the extent of this superiority and the scope for political pressure (Walt 1998: 9; Rubinstein 1998: 42). For example, the United States reportedly insisted that the markets of Eastern Europe were to be kept open to American goods and not dominated by Western Europe (Buerkle 1995). An American diplomat is reported to have suggested that through its military weight in NATO the United States was able to 'tell the Europeans what we want on a whole lot of issues – trade, agriculture, the gulf, you name it' (Friedman 1991: 3). Schwarz (1995) lists examples of senior US government officials, including Secretary Assistant of State David Ochmanek, championing US and NATO involvement in Bosnia in order to retain US influence in Europe and subsequently the ability to influence European decisions on trade and financial policy.

However, the Soviet break-up and reduced US troop numbers in Europe meant that there was a potential for US influence to wane. This was especially so as divergences grew between the United States and some NATO members (Hutchings 2009; Whitney 1996). That some NATO allies had, at times, despite being broadly cooperative, disagreed with US strategic objectives and hegemony during the Cold

War (Jackson 2009; Steel 1990; Melandri 1998) only enhanced the need for new partners likely to follow the US lead in the post-Cold War era. Bee, based on German support for the United States in the 1990s, has argued that by supporting the membership aspirations of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic the United States could 'expect to increase its intra-NATO political support by three votes' (Bee 2000: 158). Policy-makers seemed conscious of the tactical benefits of including CEE states. During Congressional debates Senators were explicit that the three proposed members, in the context of internal NATO decision making, would be 'on our side' and frequently highlighted that they would be 'pro-American'. (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3620& 2343). Albright listed one benefit of enlargement as that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic 'all believe in a strong American leadership role in Europe' (Albright 1997b). This argument was also made in non-public settings. As PRD 36 set out in December 1993, the region was of 'inherent value to the U.S.' because a 'pro-American Central and Eastern Europe broadens the basis of our influence in Europe and in the international community' (*PRD36* 1993: 5). That such tactical considerations were significant is given further credence when one considers the limitations of the military forces in the prospective new members (Schimmelfenning 1998: 209; Vlachova 2002; Barany 2002: 125-126). Despite frequently arguing that enlargement would make NATO stronger (Rosner 1997; US Department of State 1998b), the administration, when pressed, admitted that the militaries emerging from the Warsaw Pact were poorly structured and 'inadequate for modern warfare', requiring at least a decade to mature (Arms Control Association 1997). That enlargement would stretch NATO resources, add members unable to make a telling contribution and expand the territory to be defended indicates that the pace of enlargement was not dictated entirely by security concerns.

Many members of the US analytical elite promoted enlargement with the issue of maintaining US leadership in NATO in mind. RAND's 'Building a New NATO', a highly influential paper (Grayson 1992:33-61), outlined that the Visegrad states were 'pro-American' and would 'provide greater internal support for US views' (Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee 1993: 35). Neoconservative commentators in particular

endorsed enlargement on these grounds. Zalmay Khalilzad reflected that the 'Eastern Europeans are more pro-American than most of our current allies [...] they are likely to be strongly supportive of the dominant US role' (Khalilzad 1998: 1). A Heritage Foundation report for the Senate Armed Services Committee and House National Security Committee outlined that, 'US influence and leadership in Europe also can advance American interests. Indeed, it is likely that admission of new members would enhance US influence in NATO' (Heritage Foundation 1996).

As Medcalf (2008) suggests, enlargement was also seen as providing greater scope for out of area missions, deemed necessary for US global leadership. In 1993 Lake outlined the administration's desire to increase mobility and that US troops needed to be stationed overseas to maintain US 'leadership in the world' (Lake 1993). The National Defense Panel described Clinton's commitment of 100,000 US troops in Europe as a key element in the United States' ability to project power (US National Defense Panel 1997). NATO's evolution was thus, as Bee (2000) suggests, a way to support US international agendas. Holbrooke argued that a community across Europe could 'facilitate cooperation with the United States on a growing range of global issues' (Holbrooke 1995: 60). Outlining the benefits of bringing in 'eager' CEE states into NATO, Albright listed a number of agendas and locations outside the traditional NATO scope, including fighting terrorism and securing stability in trouble spots (Albright 1997a). Referencing NATO intervention in Bosnia, Christopher suggested that NATO could become the 'most potent, effective tool for military coalition-building in the world' (Christopher 1996b). Senator Roth suggested that partnership with an undivided Europe would 'enable the United States to more effectively meet the global challenges' (Roth et al. 1997: 29). A CRS briefing highlighted that motivations for enlargement included securing allies willing to cooperate 'on a range of global issues' (Gallis 1997). US efforts to secure NATO freedom to act militarily without UN consent (Arms Control Association April 1998; Hunter 1999: 200), despite most European states disagreeing, points to US efforts to secure NATO as a tool to project global influence. As Carpenter (1994: 153-154) has noted, many of the leading figures promoting new missions for NATO were the same individuals warning of waning US political influence in the Western world. For example, former US UN Ambassador Jean Kirkpatrick criticised the Clinton

administration for a 'lack of resolve and loss of credibility' in its handling of the war in Yugoslavia and warned that US retreat would have 'disastrous consequences' for NATO's viability (Kirkpatrick and Abramowitz 1994).

### *Securing US Identity and Credibility*

As Malksoo suggests, in order 'to maintain its identity as Cold War victor, the United States, as well as NATO, had to act with 'some semblance of consistency with the normative ideals they represented' (Malksoo 2004: 292). Failure to support the membership aspirations of democratising former Warsaw states risked this credibility and external validations of US identity (Schimmelfenning 1998:233). As Dunn (2005: 250) notes, during the Cold War American leadership was presented as natural and selfless rather than extraordinary, meaning continuing with this role was the only apparent moral option following the Cold War. The importance of normative consistency was recognised by some foreign policy elites. Biden reminded colleagues of the importance of 'redeeming our pledge to former captive nations' (Roth *et al.* 1997: 30). Senator Grams argued that having urged the captive nations to 'Rise up. Be Strong. Have faith' the United States could not 'turn our backs on them and the principle, the idea, the value of freedom that motivated us throughout the cold war and motivates them today' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3625). Larrabee, an influential proponent of enlargement, argued that it was important that US leadership was maintained and that this required being 'perceived to be engaged' (Larrabee 1993: 192).

The need to show support for CEE was particularly acute as aspiring NATO members frequently referenced US Cold War narratives and actions, urging the United States to act upon them (Fierke and Wiener 1999:729-730; Brzezinski 1993). Czech President Vaclav Havel reminded the West that their sympathies for democratic forces under the Soviet bloc had been a:

Source of hope for millions of people [...] the West bears a tremendous responsibility. It cannot be indifferent to what is happening in countries which – being constantly encouraged by the Western democracies have finally shaken off the totalitarian regimes (Havel 1991).

Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs Geza Jeszenszky warned that ‘NATO has won the Cold War [...] but it has yet to win the peace. If you in the West fail, all of us may become losers’ (Jeszensky 1992). Eyal (1997: 698) and Wedel (2001) suggest that Western support for the newly independent states was already viewed with frustration by the former communist states. Fierke summarised the situation when noting that what was ‘at issue was discrepancy between the ideal presented by the Western victor and its failure to act in a manner consistent with these ideals’ (Fierke 1999: 37). Exclusion from NATO would have further aggravated this dynamic and undermined the US identity by eroding external validation.

In conclusion, Cold War victory reinforced and refined long-standing perceptions of US exceptionalism in a unique way that encouraged active entanglement and leadership rather than isolationism and this was the second important Cold War ideational legacy that influenced US support for NATO enlargement. This was particularly so in Europe where Cold War policies and alliances, such as the Marshall Plan and NATO membership, had, for the first time, structurally linked the United States to Europe. For many actors, both Republican and Democrat, enlarging and diversifying NATO was a fundamental mechanism for maintaining the US identity and role as leader. The desire to maintain leadership credibility also meant that there was an incentive to offer membership to states that the United States had encouraged during the Cold War and who now sought to move towards the West. As such, one important motivation for enlargement was to confirm and fulfil US Cold War-forged identity and role in the international system.

Ideational Legacy 3: Contain likely Russian Aggression

## *Introduction*

The final Cold War ideational legacy centres on Cold War-informed perceptions of Russian identity and an on-going and disproportionate mistrust of Russia. For some, particularly Republicans and conservative analytical elites, there was a need to prevent or prepare for almost inevitable Russian aggression stemming from Russia's perceived imperial character. In 1995 Christopher suggested that a 'growing chorus of critics in the United States argues that Russia is inevitably imperial and undemocratic' (Christopher 1995: 11). This concern was influenced by Cold War formed ideas of Russian identity, with a heavy use of Cold War analogies, narratives and framings. Discussing the changing nature of states and the potential for democracy in Russia, Malia argued in 1994 that it would be 'pseudowisdom to deduce future prospects mechanically from past precedents' (Malia 1994: 47). However, many US elites appeared to do just that, with enlargement motivated by the desire to continue the Cold War policy of containment. This was, as outlined, despite clear warnings from Russia experts that neo-containment could push Russia towards negative behaviour or undermine reformers.

## *Cold War Influences*

Four Cold War influences were particularly relevant for this legacy. The first was a broad Cold War attitude that was outlined in Chapter Two: the idea that Russia could not be trusted and was an aggressive, imperial state. Decades of mistrust and fear of the USSR, with Russia seen as its imperial centre, formed a central Cold War pillar. This mistrust went back further than 1946 but was magnified and enhanced by the length and intensity of the Cold War and, as detailed, was a clear feature of institutional documents and policy-maker discourse. Mistrust and fear of Soviet aggression was enhanced by events such as the Berlin blockade, Cuban Missile Crisis, violent suppression of uprisings in Europe and invasion of Afghanistan. Mistrust became the de facto mindset in relation to the USSR, with policy-makers often assuming, and preparing for, the worst case scenario. Roosevelt had initially hoped to cooperate with the USSR and many Europeans were concerned by America's 'lack of realism' (Boyle 1990: 73-74). However, once the dominant view was that the USSR could not be trusted the United States often went further than its

allies on this theme. As Larres (1999: 100-101) outlines, there was greater interest in sustaining detente in Europe than the United States in the late 1970s, whilst Risse-Kappen (1996: 395) notes that America was the last Western state to declare the Cold War over.

The second Cold War influence was the policy that derived, in part, from the first: containment. As Chapter Two outlined, containment formed the basis of US policy towards the Soviet Union for over 40 years and this was the institutional response to the attitude of fear and mistrust – becoming central to US policy for over forty years and the de facto framework assessing US-Soviet relations. Despite evolving as the Cold War developed, the over-arching aim of limiting Soviet and communist expansion, preserving a balance in the international system, maintaining US influence in strategically important areas and, ultimately, bringing about change in Soviet thinking and actions was a core Cold War feature (Gaddis 2005). NATO was a central component of containment. Over the course of the Cold War containment became deeply embedded within institutional thinking. Indeed, Kennan had, in 1948, emphasised the role of indoctrination within bureaucracies and stressed that it needed to be ‘drummed into the minds of a very large number of persons’ (Gaddis 2005: 51-51). With the unexpected Soviet collapse there was no immediate conceptual roadmap to guide policy towards Russia making containment an easy fall-back position. Even by 1997 analytical elites, such as Richard N. Haass of The Brookings Institute, still described ‘the absence of any doctrine or idea to replace containment and guide the country’s foreign policy’ (Haass 1997). A former US official currently working in a leading US think-tank and a member of the National Security Council in the 1990s, reflected that containment was the default alternative to integration in a US-led system (2014). Such was the entrenched nature of containment that the first years of the Clinton administration were referred to internally as the ‘Kennan sweepstakes’: a conscious effort to find a post-Cold War statement of purpose to rival Kennan’s concept of containment (Dumbrell 2008: 90-91).

The third Cold War influence was NATO's institutional origins as a Cold War alliance to counter Soviet threat and minimise Soviet influence. The main point of the contention around enlargement was that NATO formed during the Cold War as a military alliance with its primary mission being collective defence (Article V) (for NATO's origins see: Smith 1990; Kaplan 2007). Not all scholars agree that the Soviet threat was the driving motivation for NATO (Borawski 1996: 38; Foot 1990). However, this was widely accepted to be the case (Lundestad 1998b: 245; Carpenter 1995: 1; Brodiw 1949). This is particularly so given the Berlin blockade, communist takeover in Czechoslovakia and that the United States had feared the possibility of a future war with the Soviet Union since 1946 (Risse-Kappen 1996: 376-377). Once created, NATO planning focused on the USSR, such as the annual 'Estimates of Soviet Strength and Capabilities' report and analyses of cumulative NATO strength compared to Soviet strength. In the United States policy-makers' explanations of NATO's purpose to the public centred on deterring attack from an aggressive power, widely accepted to the USSR (Truman 1949a; Truman 1949b; Acheson 1949: 7-8&11; Ambrose 1983: 496). As Schonberg (2000: 2&7) outlines, considering the magnitude of joining NATO, the decision enjoyed a wide margin of support across the executive and legislative branches of government – partly because of the anti-communist subtext. Certainly, US institutional memory of NATO's original purpose was to contain Soviet aggression. Influential policy-makers were clear during NATO enlargement discussions in the 1990s that NATO 'started quite clearly as a defensive alliance against Soviet aggression' (Albright 1997d).

The final Cold War influence was the institutional origins of several of the domestic organisations that most forcefully lobbied for enlargement, on the basis of containing Russian aggression. Some had personal reasons for mistrust of Russia, particularly CEE ethnic lobbies. For example, the Polish American Congress (PAC), since its creation in 1944, lobbied the US government regarding the Soviet Union, criticising the Yalta agreements and backing the creation of RFE. PAC expanded in size and influence during the Cold War, receiving addresses from Eisenhower, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush (Polish American Congress [accessed 15 February 2015]). Similarly, The American Hungarian Federation (AHF) became more political and larger during the Cold War. Following the Hungarian Revolution



in 1956 AHF helped over 65,000 Hungarian refugees settle in the United States and continued to vigorously lobby government (American Hungarian Federation []). While the influence of these lobbies should not be overstated, an example of the lobbies' developing influence during the Cold War can potentially be seen in Eisenhower signing into law Captive Nations Week in 1959 (Garrett 1978; Mathias 1981). Recalling their influence during the Cold War, the US Ambassador to the USSR, Jack Matlock, suggests that they were 'very nationalistic, very anti-communism and very anti-Russian specifically' (Matlock 2015).

### *A Clear Threat: Russia's Imperial Character*

The administration sought to emphasise that NATO's post-Cold War purpose was different from the Cold War era and that NATO-Russian relations were important, specifically warning against 'worst case assumptions' (Talbot 1994) and 'Cold War stereotypes' (Albright 1997a). However, many influential elites understood enlargement as a continuation of the Cold War mission of containing Russia. As Lieven (1999) suggests, fear of Russian aggression was based on Cold War-informed (or reinforced) assumptions of an inherently imperialistic and untrustworthy Russian character and, subsequently, simplistic framing of Russian transition and interests. Many influential Senators voicing this view, described by Kupchan (2000: 134) as Russophobes, had been strongly anti-Soviet, such as Jesse Helms and John McCain.

Leading Republican Senators drew heavily on Russia's history in the debates on NATO enlargement, with specific reference to Cold War imperial ambitions, and there was some legitimacy in Senator Moynihan's criticism of colleagues that 'we continue to act as though the Cold War is still a central reality' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3612). A Senator since 1971, William Roth, co-Chair of the Senate NATO Observer Group, warned that leaving a grey area of insecurity risked 'reawakening Moscow's history of imperialism' (Roth et al. 1997: 29). Senator Helms, elected to the Senate in 1972, strongly implied that the primary threat to the territory of NATO was 'a resurgent Russia' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3603-S3604 Helms). Senator McCain, elected to the House of

Representatives in 1982 before becoming a Senator in 1986, argued that ensuring a balance of power in Europe was NATO's main purpose but that this could only be achieved 'if it expands eastwards [...] Leaving states beyond the line risks future conflicts in Europe' (in, Solomon 1997: 216). He made clear that he saw such future threats stemming from Russia, suggesting that Russia could retaliate against Ukraine or the Baltic states (in, Goss and Just 1996). Two days prior to the Senate enlargement vote, the theme of Russian threat was prominent. Senator Lugar, advocating enlargement as a means to address possible future threats, included 'a resurgent imperialist Russia' (US Congressional Record – Senate 27 April 1998: S3618). Senator John Ashcroft suggested that 'the Soviet Union might be reconstituted' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3627). Senator Kyl proposed amendment 2310 which listed one of the potential threats to NATO as the 're-emergence of a hegemonic power confronting Europe' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3624). Senator Grams suggested that NATO should retain focus on its original mission – defending the territory of members from 'external aggression and preventing the domination of Europe by any single power'. He had Russia in mind, suggesting that Russia, like in 1948, 'would like to maintain a "sphere of influence" in Central Europe' (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3620 Helms).

These anti-Russian narratives and the associated perceived need to strengthen CEE security were championed by a range of influential, non-US government actors, including conservative analytical elites, CEE leaders and US CEE ethnic lobbies. Many had, as outlined, specific Cold War origins or experiences that influenced their view of Russia and Kupchan (2000: 131) suggests that much of the external pressure for enlargement had Russophobic strains. These groups had influence in their own right but were also important information sources to decision-makers, providing narratives of Russian imperialism that slotted easily into pre-existing intellectual structures. Conservative think-tanks strongly pushed the narrative of imperialist Russian agendas. The Heritage Foundation, which provided briefings on NATO for Senators and helped to organise and produce GOP's Contract With America (Grayson 1999: 169), described Russian opposition to enlargement as stemming almost exclusively from 'Soviet-vintage Cold Warriors' that understood 'Russia as a

unique imperial entity spanning Europe and Asia, dominating its former vassals' (Cohen 1998). The organisation warned of the potential of a resurgent, extremist leadership appearing in Russia that would restore Russia 'to her traditional imperial posture' (Cohen 1993), suggested that Russia could be a threat within ten years (Hillen 1996), promoted enlargement in order to deter future Russian aggression (Heritage Foundation 1996) and argued that enlargement would provide insurance against a potential 'revived Russian threat' (Anderson 1998).

Elite commentators, with direct access to policy-makers and significant public platforms, reinforced these arguments. Examples are Kissinger and Brzezinski, whose arguments were not only important to US enlargement debates but, as analysts have noted (Lieven 1995: 196-197; Arms Control Association 1997) were seen in Russia (or at least portrayed) as reflections of America's genuine motivations for enlargement. In November 1993 Kissinger argued in *The Washington Post* that enlargement would discourage 'historical Russian temptations' (Kissinger 1993). In December 1994 Kissinger suggested that a 'Russia facing a divided Europe would find the temptation to fill it irresistible', argued that Russia could not join NATO as the alliance's 'obligation does not run to protecting its members against each other' and suggested that it would be wise to protect against Russian challenge before it happened (Kissinger 1994b). In other articles he warned of 'turning a blind eye to the reappearance of historical Russian imperial pretensions' (Kissinger 1994) and argued that enlargement could disrupt the 'fateful rhythm of Russian history and discourage Russia's historical policy of creating a security belt and, if possible, politically dependent states around its borders' (in Helms 1997). As Grayson (1999: 168) outlines, with high profile publications, meetings with Lake, Christopher, Albright, Lugar and many other policy elites, as well as being referenced in Congress, Brzezinski was similarly influential. Brzezinski warned that any privileged role in CEE for Russia would mean that 'Russian imperial ambitions would be rekindled' and encouraged a widening of NATO (Brzezinski 1993). In particular, he warned of potential efforts of the Russian military to 'regain control over the old Soviet empire' (Brzezinski 1993).

Other conservative commentators made similar arguments. Peter W. Rodman, in *The Washington Post*, attributed Russian concerns about enlargement as stemming from ‘a desire to restore its former sphere’, warned of ‘the lengthening shadow of Russian strength’ and its ‘inevitable’ threat and argued that ‘NATO still has the job of counter-balancing it’ (Rodman 1994). Krauthammer, in *The Washington Post*, warned that Russia would ‘not easily learn the self-containment’, suggested that enlargement would rule ‘Central Europe out of bounds to Russia’ and approvingly described enlargement as ‘expanding in the service of its historic and continuing mission: containing Russia’ (Krauthammer 1998).

Although Goldgeier and McFaul (2003: 8) suggest that the influence of CEE ethnic lobbies was limited (see also, Paul and Paul 2009: 27-28, 137&151-156), other analysts have forcefully argued that they played an important role through their electoral force and lobbying of government (Grayson xi, 65, 127-8; English 2009). At the minimum, CEE leaders and US CEE ethnic lobbies, both of whom had high level access to US policy-makers, reinforced and amplified the narratives of Russian threat within US political culture and were clear that they sought NATO membership, in part, to secure protection from Russian aggression (Carpenter 1994; Pomfret 1994; White 1994; Havel 1993; Klaus 1997; Pope and Stangin 1994; Drozdiak 1997). Asmus (2002: 24-25) and Hunter (1999: 190) both recall that Clinton’s meeting with CEE leaders, in which they outlined their concerns about Russian aggression, had an important impact on Clinton’s thinking about enlargement. Asmus (2002: 24) reports that Polish president Lech Walesa told Clinton that ‘we are all afraid of Russia’. Declassified documents highlight that during a meeting in April 1993 Clinton acknowledged Walsea’s concerns about Russia, assuring him that he had ‘asked all Russian troops to be withdrawn from the foreign soil. We must roll back the threat of imperialism’ (Clinton 1993a: 3-4). US CEE ethnic lobbies reinforced these narratives. PAC, for instance, had access to Clinton and other leading officials and Senators, where they put forward their perspective of a neo-imperialist Russian policy (Grayson 1999: 155-187, Goldgeier 1999: 52-53&130-139; Asmus 2002: xxvi-xxvii; Polish American Congress [accessed 11 November 2014]). As Smith outlines (2000: 65-66& 99-100), such

groups had influence through their access to decision-makers, testimonies to Congress as well as their importance to important domestic considerations.

While such perceptions were less obvious within government bureaucracies, serious considerations of large-scale Russian aggression have been reported. Lieven, reflecting on meetings with the Pentagon and State Department in the 1990s, reports witnessing NATO enlargement being discussed in terms of containing Russia and recalls planning for ‘inconceivable acts of Russian aggression’ including invasion of Poland (Lieven 2014). Despite more modest language, some institutional documents indicate similar concerns. A Congressional Budget Office’s (1996) report analysing the probable costs of enlargement outlined five options, four of which centred on the possible threat posed by Russia. Considering the uneven nature of Russian progress and the significant challenges of transition there was logic to caution, a point the administration did make (see, Slocombe 1996). However, the level of caution was not reflective of the situation – either in terms of physical capabilities or scale of intent. Rather than dealing with Russia’s mixed progress with, as Pipes recommended, ‘immense patience and empathy’ (Pipes 1997: 78), analysis of Russia was guided by negative assumptions that influenced a motivation for enlargement as an extreme form of hedging. Hunter later admitted that ‘in the back of some minds was uncertainty against Russia and a desire to hedge against the worst – and what better time to extend NATO’s reach before a new threat emerge’ (Hunter 1999: 192). Even those primarily focused on the democratic benefits of enlargement, and that recognised Russia importance, referred to the benefits of preparing for potential Russian threats to Europe. Talbott warned that the United States needed a contingency for the danger that ‘Russia will abandon democracy and return to threatening patterns of international behaviour that have sometimes characterized its history’ (Talbott 1995). Biden argued that enlargement was ‘at a minimum, a hedge against any future wrongheaded decisions by Russia’ (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3642).

In physical terms, Holbrooke correctly warned that enlargement should not be driven by ‘anti-Russia hysteria’ because a ‘new Yalta’ or a Russian military threat was not

justified by the circumstances (Holbrooke 1995: 45). As analysts at the time outlined, Russia's military, despite its potential, was disorganised and weak and in no position to restore empire (Lambeth 1995; Meyer 1995; Garnett 1997; Zakaria 1998: 44; Blank 1998). It was reported that hundreds of thousands of soldiers were without housing, up to 95% of Russians were avoiding military draft and the army was top-heavy with officers (Raphael 1993). There were so few regular troops that, reportedly, camps were unguarded and it was a challenge to find even 2,500 soldiers for peacekeeping activities in Ingushetia (Ignatius 1993). The *Washington Post* (1994) reported that equipment was aging and much of it, including navy ships, had to be sold. As Dawisha (1997) explained, the cost of establishing empire by force was too high for Russia. As of 1998 Russia could not maintain the army at even eighty percent of its assigned level without large numbers of monthly conscripts (Blank 1998: 9). The economic crisis in Russia in 1998 made any chance of effective reform in the near-term remote. As Garnett (1997: 62) describes, even in 1997 Russia's economy was half the size of the late Soviet period and had declined for each of the previous five years. The disastrous nature of Moscow's efforts in Chechnya highlighted the depth of Russia's military weakness (Lieven 1999). These weaknesses were set out in official Russian Federation documents and the assessments of Russian policy-makers (Russian Federation 1997; Arbativ 1998). Russian military spending highlights the weaknesses. Between 1992 and 1998 Russian expenditure fell every year, other than a slight increase in 1997, and spending on the Russian military is estimated to have decreased by sixty-seven percent during this period (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: accessed 16 May 2014).

US elites were aware of Russian weakness. By 1995 military planners had estimated that preparation for a Russian conventional attack against Eastern Europe would take several years at a minimum (Nunn 1995). That officials were even considering this highlights ongoing concerns about potential Russian threat. The 1997 *Quadrennial Defense Review* was also considering the possibility of superpower threat, outlining that it was unlikely that a competitor would emerge before 2015 that could 'challenge the United States militarily around the world as the Soviet Union did' (US

Department of Defense 1997: 5). A CRS briefing for Senators was explicit that the threat posed by Russia had significantly reduced (Gallis 1997). Even critics of Russia, such as Ariel Cohen from the Heritage Foundation, recognised that Russian forces were ‘facing their deepest crisis since the fiascos of the Russo-Japanese War and World War I’ (Cohen 1996). Despite this, many actors, as outlined above, conflated Russian military capacity and intent with the USSR’s, irrespective of the material context. As Garnett noted, Western observers ‘use a vocabulary that exaggerates the country’s capabilities for constructive or destructive behaviour’ (Garnett 1997: 61 and Lieven 1999: 270).

Like its military capacity, Russian policies, while mixed, were exaggerated and frequently viewed through a prism of threat that failed to sufficiently recognise Russia’s challenges and security interests. Much of the interpretation stemmed from the Cold War mindset of seeing Russia’s future in dichotic terms with idealistic or catastrophic endpoints. Brzezinski argued that ‘Russian can be either an empire or a democracy’ (Brzezinski 1994a: 72). Clinton suggested that Russia’s future would be either a peaceful democracy or an authoritarian empire (Clinton 1994b). Czech Republic president Vaclav Havel (1993) suggested, in the *New York Times*, that Russia’s future was limited to two possible scenarios – democratic forces succeeding and not seeing NATO as a threat or totalitarian and communist factions harnessing Russian imperial ambitions over the former Soviet Union. Russia’s concerns were also often cast in familiar Cold War terms. As Carpenter (1995: 157) suggests, some elites were unable to distinguish between the hegemonic ambitions of a totalitarian Soviet Union and the traditional behaviours of a great power (see also, Sestanovich 1994b: 94-95). Beissinger (1997) argues that, in the post-Cold War context, although recognising the difference between great power politics and empire building was difficult, many in the United States leaned automatically towards the latter. While, as detailed above, conservative elites particularly made this comparison, more centrist organisations also resorted to Cold War imagery. Describing Russian’s role in post-Soviet space regional disputes, Fiona Hill and Pamela Jewett, for the Brookings Institute suggested that Russia was seeking to ‘reassert control of its former empire’ and criticised the administration for acquiescing the ‘de facto reconstitution of the USSR’ (Hill and Jewett 1994: 86-88).

However, given the context, it was far from clear that Russia was reconstituting an authoritarian empire. Despite set-backs, at the decade's end McFaul, reflecting on regime change in other great powers, concluded that 'Russia's dramatic regime change has been relatively peaceful' and that Russia had displayed 'little of the belligerent activity that we expect to see from states undergoing radical political and economic transformations' (McFaul 1997-98: 6&33; McFaul 1999). Gann (1993: 18) observed that the former Soviet empire had been dismantled more peacefully than the British empire in India, French empire in Algeria or the Portuguese empire in Angola and Mozambique. Similarly, Lieven (2000/2001) described the Russian retreat as one of the most bloodless retreats in all of history. It was, as Garnett puts it, 'the largest strategic [military] withdrawal in history' (Garnett 1997: 64). Bowker concluded that, despite its more assertive policies, Russia had 'generally not acted irresponsibly in foreign affairs' (Bowker 2000: 17) whilst Rubin (1998) argued that, despite aggressive rhetoric, Russian use of military force had been limited and usually for reasons of security rather than nationalism. While Russia had the potential to be an aggressive force in Europe, it was neither inevitable nor imminent. Russia had accepted NATO's increased engagement with CEE through PfP, supported NATO operations in Bosnia and, while there was coercion along its borders, an empire was not being forcibly recreated (Kupchan 1996: 98; McFaul 1997-98; Kupchan 2000: 141).

### ***Securing Ratification***

The administration often articulated the importance of ensuring that Russia understood that NATO had 'left the Cold War behind and move[d] on to dealing with a new era' (Perry 1995) and that Russia should 'play a vital role in every institution and undertaking of our New Atlantic Community' (Christopher 1996b: 603). However, such ambitions and messaging were complicated by the need to secure enlargement ratification. Some push-back on anti-Russian narratives was made by senior officials (Christopher 1995: 11). However, as highlighted, many of the most-influential Senators viewed enlargement through the prism of containment and deterrence. Helms, for example, criticised any enlargement rationale motivated



by, 'appeasement of Russia' (Helms 1997). It was thus necessary to reassure Republican Senators by highlighting the continuity of NATO's mission and the lack of any concessions to Russia.

To achieve this the NATO Expansion Ratification Office (NERO) adopted a strategy that, while attempting to not harm relations with Russia, downplayed having negotiated with Russia or adapting NATO's core purpose (Grayson 1999: 113&120-122; Asmus 2002: 251-288). As such, internal messages concerning enlargement were not always consistent with external explanations. By reassuring Senators that few concessions were being afforded to Russia the US was signalling that Russia was not considered a partner whilst highlighting the on-going military dimension implied that enlargement was in part motivated by a desire to contain Russian power.

The need to reassure senators became particularly evident following Albright's first major Congressional testimony on the subject. As Asmus (2002: 26-262) has noted, her focus on democratisation and transforming NATO was treated with scepticism by many Senators, including the Chair. Later testimonies struck a tighter balance between NATO's new purposes and original mission, including preventing Russian aggression. While stressing that she was hopeful of a Russian transition, Albright emphasised to the Foreign Relations Committee in October 1997 that the most important issue to consider was 'direct threats against the soil of NATO members [...] one should not dismiss the possibility that Russia could return to the patterns of its past' (Albright 1997b). Administration officials, in response to queries from Senators, outlined that enlargement was necessary to prepare for possible future threats, 'including the possibility that Russia could abandon democracy and return to the threatening behaviour of the Soviet period' and confirmed that enlargement was designed to make NATO 'more effective in its core mission: countering aggression against its member states' (Arms Control Association 1997). When questioned about the advisability of extending the nuclear umbrella, administration staff responded that US nuclear forces were the principle means by which NATO deterred Soviet attack and that the weapons still fulfilled an essential role in preventing coercion and preserving peace. Such coercion could only realistically stem from Russia. The

officials noted, though suggesting that it was unlikely, that NATO needed to be prepared for the possibility that Russia could 'return to the threatening behaviour of the Soviet period' (Arms Control Association 1997).

Domestic restrictions also influenced the parameters of negotiation and engagement with Russia. As Hanson (1998: 15) suggests, despite two-track engagement, the administration offered Russia little genuine influence. Nevertheless, the NATO-Russia Founding Act and other offers to Russia provoked significant domestic backlash (for examples, Hillen 1997; Kissinger 1997a; Mendelson 1997: 19-20). Helms' criticism of the government for having gone too far in its cooperation with Russia and demands that the NATO-Russia relationship have 'impenetrable firewalls' against a Russian voice in NATO decision making and that the JPC be a forum for explaining decisions, not negotiating, summarised the conservative position (US Congressional Record – Senate 1998a: S3606&S3606). Asmus (2002: 274) reports that the administration had to emphasise the lack of concessions, which further reinforced mixed messages towards Russia. For example, a fact sheet released by the State Department's Ratification Office was blunt in highlighting its lack of compromise, declaring that in relation to the PJC the 'Alliance has made no concessions to Russia' (US Department of State 1998b). As Braun (2007: 68) and MacFarlane (2001) assert, the failure of the PJC during the Kosovo war highlighted the shallowness of the partnership functions (for analysis of Russia's view of NATO policy in Kosovo see: Stepanova 1999; Tsygankov 2001; Granville 2000). Similarly, despite the non-binding NATO *communiqué* in December 1996 that there was 'no intention, no plan, and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new member states', (NATO 1996a) and reassurances that the same was true of troops and equipment, the administration was again forced to publicly emphasise the lack of substantive offers to Russia or limits to future NATO options (Albright 1997b). It is noteworthy that most European allies wanted to establish a firmer footing with Russia before enlargement. It was also the Europeans that instigated the NATO-Russia Charter (Gallis 1997).

Domestic factors not only constrained and influenced engagement with, and signals towards, Russia, they also contributed to the reification of Russia as a special case. By reaffirming NATO's hedging role against Russia and introducing members whose primary motivation was protection from Russia, Russia was seemingly the only state in the region with no chance of joining NATO. A small number of individuals, (Baker 1993; Bell 1995; Zakaria 1998; Russett and Stam 1998), in the foreign policy elite argued that Russia should not be excluded. Indeed, the administration did not explicitly rule it out, even offering some limited encouragement (for examples, Dobbs and Smith 1995; Yost 1998: 139; *New York Times* 1994: 3; Talbott 1997). However, for many, Russia remained the 'other' whose membership would undermine the purpose of NATO, despite fundamental contextual changes. Analysis by Ditter (2007) highlights that this framing was also prominent in the media. This meant engagement with Russia on membership was different from the other former Warsaw Pact states. States including Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia were explicitly referenced by NATO and US officials regarding future rounds of enlargement (Perlmutter 1998; Clinton 1998b; NATO 1999). Conversely, US conservatives and potential and (some) existing NATO members argued that Russian membership would undermine NATO's purpose; Russian membership was often de facto rejected (for examples see, Roth *et al.* 1997: 31; Grayson 1999: 73; Kissinger 1993; Yost 1998: 135-140; Kober 1996). Broder, in the *Washington Post*, described Clinton's policy as one that 'effectively bars Russia from NATO membership' (Broder 1998). Not only was Russia not a part of Europe politically or militarily, but was, as Pipes put it, 'categorically excluded' (Pipes 1997: 78) with Hanson describing Russia as 'strategically isolated' (Hanson 1998: 15). As Senator Smith put it, enlargement created 'insiders and outsiders' (US Congressional Record –April 1998a: S3637). Critics questioned why the administration's argument that it would be a mistake to see conflict within CEE 'as unique or immutable', did not apply to Russia (Arms Control Association 1997). Bell (1995), Kupchan (2000: 129) and Baker (2002: 99) noted Russia's unique exclusion by highlighting that NATO is a patchwork of former adversaries.

Scholars such as Kupchan (1996: 98) and Kurth (2001: 506) point out that it was not unreasonable for Russia to object to the expansion of a military alliance from which it was excluded. Effectively vetoing Russian membership neglected an opportunity to promote reform and bring Russia closer to the West and reinforced Russian perceptions that NATO was targeted against Russia and, as scholars such as Kamp (1998) suggested, potentially put NATO on a collision course over future inclusions. This, alongside the noted partial and often tokenistic engagement with Russia, fuelled nationalist narratives and contributed to, or was used to justify, negative behaviours (from a US perspective) in Russia. These included an increased emphasis on CIS integration, strengthening ties with China and Iran, threats of potential military counter-measures in Europe, failure to ratify START II, freezing relations with NATO following the intervention in Kosovo and a new draft military doctrine in 1999 (Russian Federation 1999) that shifted the focus to external threats and perceived efforts to weaken Russia (Pipes 1997: 76; Garnett 1997; Arbatov 1998; Israelyan 1998; Blank 2000; Wallander 2000). As declassified documents show, it also put increased strain on presidential relations, with Yeltsin telling Clinton at one point that the US-Russian friendship had reached its limits, both in Europe and the world (Weiss 1999: 3). As one former official now working in a leading US think-tank (2014) suggests, 'US actions played into Russia fears'.

In summary, while there were understandable concerns about Russia, the severe weaknesses of the Russian military dictated that there was no time-critical need to enlarge NATO as a hedging mechanism. However, for an influential group of (primarily) conservatives, enlargement was a necessary continuation of Cold War policy – offering protection to Europe from an inherently imperialist Russia. This Cold War ideational legacy meant that Russia was often considered a special case, most notably in that, despite an open-door policy, it was extremely unlikely that Russia could ever be considered for NATO membership. There were alternatives to rapid NATO enlargement that would have been less antagonistic to Russia and detrimental to long-term US-Russian relations. This is not least since Russian officials believed that the United States had promised not to enlarge if the USSR permitted German membership (Kramer 2009). As scholars such as Lepgold (1995) argued, rapid enlargement would be the best policy if it was clearly necessary to

thwart a revanchist Russia; otherwise, it risked creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. Informed by Cold War experiences and understandings, US actors prepared for (and often expected) the worst. This complicated relations with Russia, whose transition was crucial to US security, and undermined the administration's message of partnership in a new era, as well as empowering extremist narratives in Russian politics.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, there were several factors, both domestic and international, that influenced US support for, and leadership of, NATO enlargement. Amongst these were Cold War ideational legacies that influenced different sections of the US foreign policy elite in different ways but all of which dictated NATO enlargement was perceived as logical and necessary in the short-term. For some US elites, enlargement was a consolidation of democracy's ideological victory in the Cold War, fulfilling the mission of Cold War presidents by spreading now unarguably universal values across a united Europe. This was considered to promote freedom and safeguard US security based on the assumption that democracies do not fight one another. For others, particularly conservatives, enlargement was a continuation of NATO's Cold War mission – to contain potential Russian aggression. The use of Cold War analogies and entrenched attitudes, amplified by Cold War-forged groups and organisations, contributed to a perception of an inherently imperialistic Russian character that needed to be addressed through enlargement to spread NATO's deterrence more widely across Europe. Both these legacies were buttressed by the widely shared ideational legacy concerning the United States' identity as a global leader with a mandated role to provide leadership, particularly in Europe. These legacies were underpinned by US actors' conceptions of both US and Russian identities and roles in the post-Cold War international system.

Ideational legacies contributed to a preference for speedy NATO enlargement ahead of other options or a slower pace. This pace and the internal debates about Russian threat undermined US messages about partnership with Russia and set in motion an

on-going source of bilateral tension, significantly damaging Russian and US perceptions of one another and contributing to, or at least providing legitimisation for, greater push-back against Western agendas. Rapid enlargement, in part to hedge against Russia, responded to a risk that did not yet exist and risked exacerbating feelings of insecurity within Russia, empowering more radical elements, undermining US-Russian relations and curbing hopes of bringing Russia towards the West. The administration had been clear that, despite the focus on democracy enlargement, US policy would be pragmatic and would require American to 'befriend and even defend non-democratic states for mutually beneficial reasons' (Lake 1993). Despite the many issues required Russian support, this pragmatism was often missing in relation to US foreign policy towards Russia. Rather than recognising the nuances of Russian security interests and challenges of transition, Cold War based assumptions about Russia contributed to support for enlargement despite the clear warnings about how this would be perceived in Russia.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Democracy Promotion in the Post-Soviet Space**

#### **Introduction**

Despite the deterioration in US-Russian relations across the 1990s outlined in the previous chapter, in the wake of 9/11 it appeared that this could be reversed as Russia became an important strategic partner to the United States in the global war on terrorism (GWOT). Despite early promising signs, including the ratification of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) in 2003, US-Russian relations badly stalled during the period of the George W. Bush administration. As analysts such as Bowker (2008: 165) and Stent (2014: 264) suggest, one factor in this was US democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space. This chapter explores the ways in which Cold War ideational legacies influenced an approach to democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009 that hindered cooperative relations with Russia – an important actor in primary US security goals. It highlights how interpretations of the Cold War and its ending shaped understandings concerning the identity and roles of the United States and Russia generally and of their roles in the post-Soviet space specifically. These combined with entrenched institutional assumptions, practices and attitudes contributed to the second major slump in post-Cold War US-Russian relations.

As scholars such as Diamond (1999) and Carothers (1999) outline, US democracy promotion is a multi-faceted endeavour. This chapter subsequently analyses a broad collection of actors. As will be outlined, not only does US democracy promotion lack an effective central coordination mechanism, but the range of activities that can fall under the umbrella of democracy promotion means that actors outside of the US administration can have significant influence. Furthermore, many of the organisations formed or expanded during the Cold War, such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and Freedom House, are technically separate from the government despite delivering democracy promotion activities with government funds. Indeed, McFaul (2005a: 14-15) notes that policymakers have often had little influence on the design or implementation of specific democracy

assistance programmes. Equally important is that many of these Cold War-era organisations reportedly influence the administration's approach, meaning that their analysis of Russia is important (Freedom House 2003) whilst analysts suggest that Russia frequently conflates the policies and rhetoric of these organisations with the official US position (Stent 2014: 102; Lieven 2014). The range of actors contributed to a variety of messages being communicated, part of an inconsistent and mixed democracy promotion approach towards Russia. Organisations such as Freedom House were often more critical of Russia than many in the George W. Bush administration and Russian policy-makers took notice of reports from such organisations and reacted negatively to their perceived interference (Osipovich 2008).

The chapter sets out a background to US democracy promotion and the concepts and assumptions that underpin it before providing a short context for the period under focus. It then outlines two ideational legacies that influenced how US actors shaped democracy promotion policies and how analytical elites and key foreign policy institutions framed events in the post-Soviet space. The first legacy was an uncertainty about Russia's identity and trajectory that centred on conflicting assumptions about Russia's future based on interpretations of the Cold War's end. More liberal and optimistic assumptions about Russia moving closer to the United States politically and economically were balanced against retained mistrust of Russia, seeing it as a potential threat. There was a clear tension between stated expectations at the Cold War's end and the entrenched attitudes that developed during the Cold War. Both schools of thought had expectations that Russia would, or would have to, support a US-led agenda and contributed to a tendency to overemphasise the role of ideology in Russia's policy decisions and support or opposition to US policies. This contributed to an inconsistent approach to democracy promotion and mixed messaging concerning US perceptions of Russia and the importance placed on Russian democratisation. Excessive praise of Russia's trajectory, despite democratic set-backs, were balanced against disproportionate criticism that other strategically important, non-democratic states were often spared.



The second legacy was a particularly strong assumed democratic trajectory for parts of the non-Russian post-Soviet space, particularly Georgia and Ukraine following the Colour Revolutions, and assumptions about a leading role for the United States in supporting this. This contributed to an approach and level of democracy promotion that undermined the strategic relationship with Russia. It also contributed to simplistic framings of tensions between these states and Russia, often casting the tensions in Cold War terms of an aggressive Russia threatening a democratic state. The chapter concludes that, while there were a number of important agendas and international events that influenced the US approach towards Russia, Cold War ideational legacies contributed to this by influencing an approach to democracy promotion in the region that undermined US-Russian relations. As such, despite Bush proclaiming in 2001 that the 'Cold War is long gone' (Bush 2001c), the influence of Cold War ideational legacies continued to play an important role in shaping US foreign policy towards Russia and in the ways that Russia was debated by the US foreign policy elite.

This legacy was influenced by Cold War framings, historical narratives, institutional origins and the logic of habit. Interpretations formed during the Cold War of Russian identity alongside stated expectations for its trajectory, based on interpretations of the Cold War's end, as well as the history of viewing US-Russian relations through the lens of ideology, contributed to the inconsistency. Cold War-informed narratives of US exceptionalism and expectations about the international system in the post-Cold War era influenced US perceptions of its own role in promoting democracy and its legitimacy to do so. Cold War-era formed organisations, such as Freedom House and NED, the decentralised structure of democracy promotion that formed during the Cold War, a reliance on historical framings during periods of uncertainty and entrenched attitudes were also important factors in the US democracy approach towards the post-Soviet region.

## **Democracy Promotion: Theory, Practice and History**

### ***Theories and Concepts Of, and Underpinning, Democracy Promotion***

This chapter accepts Bouchet's definition of democracy promotion as, 'the widest possible range of actions that a state can take to influence the political development of another towards greater democratization' and his suggestion that democracy promotion activities can be conceived of as actions at different points along a democracy promotion scale (Bouchet 2011: 573). Saara offers a sufficiently broad but compartmentalised definition to provide a framework for analysis, arguing that democracy promotion should be 'viewed as both political action and financial, "technical" assistance' in order to improve democratic governance and liberal democratic values in the target state' (Saara 2009: 732). To this can be added, at an extreme, military assistance, posturing or threats or direct support (such as financial, training or information provision) for oppressed democratic movements. As scholars such as Burnell (2004), Carothers (2009) and Nau (2013: 147) outline, within this overarching framework there is a wide spectrum of practical approaches to delivering democracy promotion. At one end is promoting democracy by providing an example that can act as a model for others. This approach fits within the 'shining city on a hill' metaphor that policy-makers, including Kennedy and Reagan, used to highlight America's role in setting an example to the world (Kennedy 1961a; Reagan 1989). As Miller (2010) highlights, at the other end of the spectrum sits military activity or other actions related to organised protest.

Between these opposite ends are numerous approaches. The most common of these include: efforts to foster civil society, such as funding for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs); supporting fair elections; building societal infrastructures; putting pressure on incumbents to make reforms through foreign and economic policy or diplomacy; and direct assistance to opposition, pro-democracy elements within the country (Carothers and Ottaway 2000). One form of democracy promotion that it is important to emphasise is highly public criticism or condemnation of democratic failings or, to borrow a term from human rights analysts, 'shaming' (Franklin 2008; Murdie 2012). As will be outlined, shaming played a role in the US democracy promotion approach towards Russia and was also

a regular feature during the Cold War. Shaming is a more debated strand of democracy promotion and scholars have, as will be highlighted, criticised the United States for a level of rhetoric around democracy promotion not matched by the same level of action. Similarly, as will be outlined, this approach can have negative consequences by encouraging an incumbent government to perceive threat and entrench its levers of control.

The concept of democracy promotion stems from a number of theoretical underpinnings, such as Democratic Peace Theory (DPT). Whilst having several empirical and theoretical forms and overlapping with related theories such as commercial peace, DPT, posits that democracies do not go to war with each other (Doyle 1986; Russett 1993; Brown, Lynn-Jones and Miller 1996). Consequently, the greater the number of democratic states the lower the chances of war and thus the greater level of security. Some scholars point to other possible motivations for democracy promotion, such as an increased normative expectation to promote democracy (McFaul 2004) or it being considered an ethical duty (Bohm and Cardwell 2010). At the other end of the spectrum sit theories of power maximisation which view democracy promotion, at least partly, as a tool to enhance international influence and achieve specific economic outcomes by seeking to promote primarily stability – democracy promotion being the means to that end (Robinson 2000; Gills 2000).

While many of the theoretical underpinnings behind democracy promotion can thus be understood, there has been little agreement on how, and to what degree, democracy should be promoted in practice. There are several reasons for this. These include practical issues highlighted by scholars such as Melia (2005), including a lack of central control over democracy promotion, as well as divisions regarding whether the United States should pro-actively attempt to influence the domestic politics of other states or should serve only as an example, or what Tucker terms Exemplars or Crusaders (Tucker 1986). Democracy promotion is further complicated by the fact that there are multiple understandings of democracy itself. Such

difficulties have resulted in an approach that, despite the prominence of democracy promotion in foreign policy discourse, has been inconsistent in implementation.

### ***US Democracy Promotion during the Cold War: The Institutionalisation of Democracy Promotion***

Although analysts debate the sincerity of US commitment to democracy promotion (see: Chomsky 1992; Cox, Ikenberry and Inoguchi 2000; Smith 2012) there is no doubt that US support for democracy has a lengthy history in US foreign policy discourse (for examples see: Wilson 1917; Roosevelt 1940) and that there are examples that can be used to support an argument of genuine commitment. It was the Cold War period, however, that provided the first sustained, international, ideological campaign where actions were underpinned by, as outlined, messianic rhetoric concerning freedom and democracy. As Bouchet (2013b: 33) notes, the need to balance Soviet power, as well as the importance of other strategic priorities, contributed to only a limited amount of specific tangible US actions to promote democracy during the Cold War. Nevertheless, sustained ideological language was supported by some tangible actions as well as by the institutionalisation of democracy assistance. The Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Radio Free Europe, the Peace Corps, public criticism of the Soviet political system and encouragement of the stabilisation of Western European democracies are examples of over-arching activities and positions that can be seen to have provided either support for democracy or for an environment where democracy was more likely to take hold.

While for some Cold War presidents, such as Reagan, direct tangible democracy assistance was central to the democracy promotion approach, for others (particularly in the early Cold War years), denying totalitarianism allowed the space for the natural condition of democracy to develop (Folly 2013: 92). Other actions promoted democracy in specific ways. Examples include creating the 'Helsinki' Commission and pushing Taiwan, South Korea and the Philippines towards electoral democracy – indicative of the more direct approach employed in the 1980s following detente and Reagan's election (Reagan 1983e; Scott 1996; Smith 266-307). Further examples

include democracy assistance programmes in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other states in Europe and the Baltics between 1989 and 1991, such as the Support for East European Democracy Act (SEED) of 1989 which was designed to promote democracy and free markets in the former communist countries of Central and East Europe (CEEC) (Epstein, Serafino and Miko 2007: 28-29). Goldgeier and McFaul suggest that policy-makers 'invented all sorts of new tools for foreign policy [...] to facilitate regime change in other countries' (Goldgeier and McFaul 2003: 6). Throughout the Cold War public criticism of the Soviet system was a feature of presidential rhetoric and a method for putting pressure on the Soviet Union. As Smith (2012: 242-244) highlights, the introduction of annual reports under Carter that reported on human rights standards in other states and public criticism of communist system were an important feature of Cold War democracy promotion. Matlock (2014) recalls that Carter was so up front about human rights that it made working with the USSR more difficult although he himself saw the value of promoting US values, and used a TV addresses on a Soviet station to do so (Matlock 2004: 20-21).

The promotion of democracy was institutionalised through various bodies and laws during the Cold War. The Foreign Assistance Act, passed in 1961, was designed to coordinate and promote economic and social development and USAID was created to act as the central agency responsible for administering foreign aid. NED was created in 1983 in order to advance democracy overseas. Freedom House, established in 1941, became increasingly influential throughout the Cold War, with its defence of Soviet dissidents and publication of the annual 'Freedom in the World' reports from 1973 onwards. It was thus in opposition to the Soviet Union that US democracy promotion became institutionalised and a central component of US foreign policy. As Folly (2013: 93&97) notes, under the Truman administration, the conflation of anti-communist with democratic was an important indicator for future policy, with the purpose of democracy promotion being centred not just on value-laden grounds but also to undermine Soviet interests and advance US security.

There were, however, tensions between supporting democracy in the short-term and checking potential Soviet expansion as well as satisfying other strategic priorities. As such, US foreign policy during the Cold War often seemed to run in conflict with the stated desire to support democracy. While it can be argued that there may have been a perceived need to move away from ideological blueprints in given security situations, a distinction Seliger (1976: 108-109) defines as fundamental and operative ideology (see also, Macdonald 2000), analysts including Ullman (1975), Forsythe (1992), Schmitz (2006) Barrett (2007), Foot (2010: 450-451) and Narizny (2012: 346) highlight, the United States sometimes served to support what Carothers and Ottaway term 'friendly tyrants' (Carothers and Ottaway 2000: 7). For example, up until 1983 the United States had supported Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, despite his corruption and abuse of human rights, for the sake of military bases (Karnow 1989). The impact of other strategic agendas on democracy promotion was demonstrated by the limited response to the Tiananmen Square massacre. Despite initially imposing sanctions, the *Themes* document produced by the State Department in June 1989 emphasised that the United States was keen to maintain good relations with China, highlighted the benefits of strategic cooperation and referred to the crackdown as 'an internal affair' (US Department of State 1989). Such actions provided a context for the Soviet Union to criticise the United States' commitment to democracy (for examples see: *Tass* 1983; Rosenthal 2012).

### ***US Democracy Promotion in the post-Cold War Era Prior to George W. Bush***

Democracy promotion was, and is, uniquely understood in the United States. Huntington (1982), Seymour (1996), Madsen (1998) and Rojecki (2008) have all outlined the influence of perceived American exceptionalism on US policy whilst US policy-makers have consistently spoken of American exceptionalism. This sense of superiority and uniqueness was reinforced by the Cold War, as outlined earlier, commonly being understood as a victory which validated and reinforced the idea of US values as universal and the United States as a legitimate world leader. The increased spread of democracy from the mid-1970s, what Huntington (1993) describes as the 'third wave', further reinforced these ideas. As such democracy promotion was, from a US perspective, a legitimate activity for the benefit of the

international community. In relation to Russia, the Cold War overlapped with, and reinforced, aspects of American exceptionalism to shape US perceptions that were uniquely underpinned by a sense of relative superiority, as well as mistrust of Russia. Ethnocentric perspectives of superiority (Tsygankov 2013b) overlapped with historical interactions to enhance the sense of victory in the Cold War and to influence specific perceptions of Russia as a defeated, inferior state that needed to learn from the United States. As outlined, early Cold War documents, such as Kennan's Long Telegram, assigned superiority to the West.

Post-Cold War US democracy promotion has been primarily administered through the State Department, USAID, NED, Freedom House and several independent or semi-independent organisations. Democracy promotion lacks complete central coordination and elements of democracy promotion are delivered through other departments and organisations. The rhetoric of democracy's superiority, most famously articulated by Fukuyama (1992), entrenched pro-democracy narratives within the foreign policy community. As outlined in Chapter Two, George H. W. Bush frequently championed the idea of democratisation and a New World Order, which included a leading role for the United States in supporting and promoting freedom. Despite Bush's contribution to democracy promotion, such as instructing every US embassy in Africa to develop a democracy promotion strategy, efforts were, as Carothers (1995: 14&18) notes, on a limited scale, varied greatly from region to region and were dependent on the overall configuration of US interests. Indeed, several Democrats, including then Senator Joe Biden (1992), and scholars such as Chomsky (1991) were extremely sceptical of Bush's commitment to democracy.

Gideon (2000: 189) notes that the Clinton administration was, at least rhetorically, in the Crusader camp, describing the enlargement of democracy as one of the main pillars of its foreign policy (Lake 1993). As Carothers (2000: 4) and Bouchet (2013a) outline, the administration also made tangible changes, such as the further institutionalisation of democracy promotion, including creating a NSC director for democracy role. By the end of the 1990s the government was spending more than

\$700 million annually on democracy assistance in over 100 hundred countries (Carothers 1999: 332). USAID's focus on democracy increased, with the organisation's 'Democracy & Governance' obligations rising from \$317 million to \$494 million between 1993 and 2000 (Bouchet 2013a: 166). However, whilst democracy promotion played a role in US policy towards some states, the Clinton administration followed a similar semi-realist approach to George H. W. Bush (Carothers 2000: 3). Democracy promotion application was inconsistent and rarely trumped economic or security interests and, despite the increase in funding, financial commitment was still low compared to spending in other foreign policy areas (Carothers 1995; Brinkley 1997; Travis 1998; Carothers 2000; Rieffer and Mercer 2005: 390-396; Bouchet 2013a).

### ***The Democracy Promotion Approach of the George W. Bush Administration***

Bush's presidential campaign and first few months in office did little to suggest that democracy promotion would be a main focus for the administration (Bush 2000). Despite this, as Carothers (2007b) and Bouchet (2013a) outline, democracy promotion became central to the foreign policy discourse and, to a lesser degree, actions of the Bush administration. 9/11 and the subsequent GWOT were the catalysts for the administration's focus on democracy promotion, both as wider US grand strategy and, as Hobson (2005) and Carothers (2003) have outlined, part of the GWOT. Following 9/11 the administration employed an approach that assumed US security to be dependent on the ability to directly influence the domestic politics of potentially threatening or failed states. The expansion of US values, systems and power was equated with security, as they were during the Cold War. As Bush argued in 2003, 'democracy and reform will make [Middle Eastern states] stronger and more stable, and make the world more secure by undermining terrorism at its source' (Bush 2003). This position was reflected in key institutional documents, including 2003 *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* and the 2002 and 2006 *National Security Strategies* (White House 2002, 2003: 2-3, 2006:5-6&31). This contributed to an increased willingness to use military intervention as a democracy promotion tool. The association between US security and democracy promotion was most obviously articulated in Bush's Second Inaugural Address in January 2005.



Referencing the ‘shipwreck of communism’ and ‘ideologies that feed hatred’, Bush argued that:

The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world (Bush 2005a).

The discourse of democracy promotion was supported by increased resources and tangible actions. Under Clinton NED had operated on a budget of approximately \$30 million annually. By 2002 the administration was funding NED \$48.5 million annually (Rieffer and Mercer 2005: 397). By 2006 NED’s core appropriation from the government had increased to almost \$60 million and this rose to nearly \$75 million by 2007 and reached \$100 million in 2008 (Lowe 2013). The State Department’s Human Rights Democracy Funds (HRDF) increased each year from a base of approximately nine million dollars in 2000 to almost seventy million in 2007 (US Department of State 2009a). Giannone outlines that funding for Freedom House increased by an estimated 241% between 2001 and 2006 (Giannone 2010: 75). By 2008 the ‘Democracy and Governance’ programme in USAID had reached \$1.71 billion (USAID 2009: 10.). While it is difficult to estimate the exact expenditure, Fenton and Feffer (2009) estimate that democracy promotion spending under Bush more than doubled – from \$650 million in 2001 to a requested \$1.72 billion in 2009. Hassan (2011) outlines that a number of acts and structures served to further institutionalise democracy promotion within foreign-policy. The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), launched in 2002, sought to promote political, economic and educational development in the Middle East. MEPI initially received \$29 million annually. By 2005 it was receiving £75 million (Carothers 2005: 2). Other structures included the Millennium Challenge Account and the United Nations Democracy Fund. Democracy promotion was further institutionalised through the signing into law of the ADVANCE Democracy Act in 2007 and Bush’s National Presidential Security Directive (NSPD 58) – ‘Institutionalizing the Freedom Agenda’ (2008) – which, as Glen (2011: 279) outlines, sought to further enhance transformational diplomacy within the State Department.

At times democratisation was a feature of diplomatic relations. For instance, *The Washington Times* (2005) reported that Bush publicly and privately encouraged President Mubarak to hold competitive elections in Egypt. As Diamond (2007: 300) notes, such an approach was usually employed where there were no other significant interests and became less apparent following the election of Hamas and Hezbollah and the electoral gains of the Muslim Brotherhood. The administration also employed a broader approach to democracy promotion, which included traditional elements, such as funding civil society groups and supporting competitive elections, as well as more controversial strands, including, as Hallams (2011) explores, an increased use of hard power – most notably to secure regime change in Iraq and Afghanistan. Such was the scale and rhetoric of democracy promotion that Diamond suggested in 2007 that Bush could arguably be viewed as ‘the most pro-democracy and pro-democracy promotion president in American history’ (Diamond 2007: 299). While there was an increase in tangible and funded democracy promotion activities this must not be overstated. As Carothers (2007b: v) has suggested, rhetoric often far outweighed quantifiable promotion of democracy. Iraq absorbed a huge proportion of the total funding assigned to democracy promotion activities. As the graph below highlights, the State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor’s spending on activities related to democracy in Iraq far outweighed all other democracy related spending combined.

**Table Two: Summary of DRL Foreign Assistance (in \$k)**

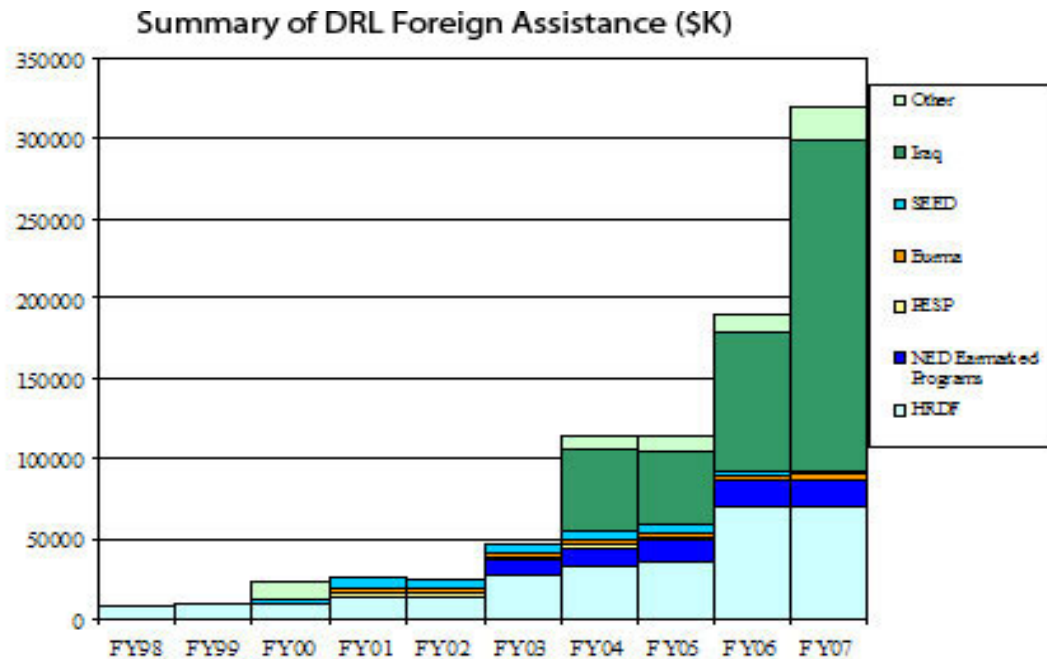


Table Two: Summary of DRL Foreign Assistance. <http://2001-2009.state.gov/g/drl/p/index.htm> (US Department of State 2009).

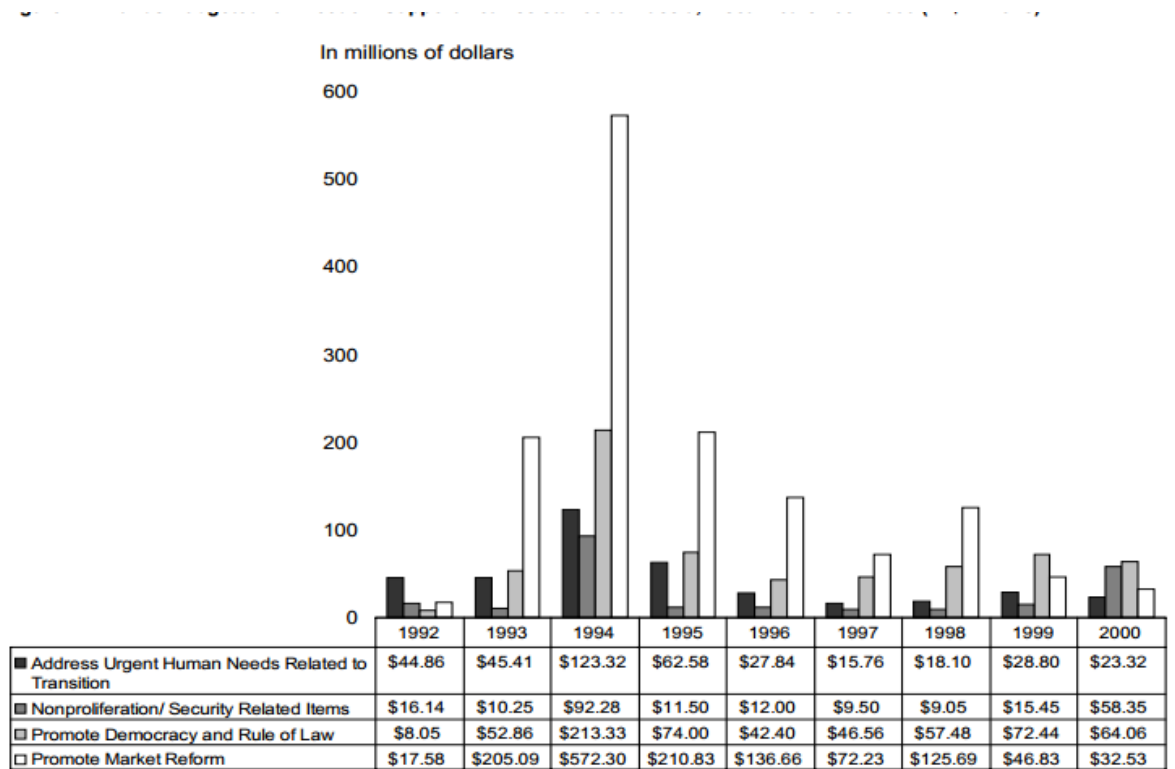
USAID priorities were similar. The USAID 2007 funding request to Congress stated that, ‘USAID will support US foreign policy goals with special emphasis on Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other front-line states in the War on Terror’ (USAID 2007: 17). Furthermore, as analysts such as Carothers (2003) have noted, the United States worked closely with states employing clear non-democratic practices when it was in the strategic interest, such as Pakistan and many of the Central Asian states. Despite this the administration and elites surrounding it went to great lengths to portray democracy promotion as core to the administration’s priorities and were focused on maintaining this image (for example, Dobriansky and Carothers 2003).

### ***The Democracy Promotion Approach of the George W. Bush Administration in the Post-Soviet Space***

Bush’s approach to democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space also had significant differences to that of his predecessors. The end of the Cold War and the

optimism regarding Russia's future led to a heavy emphasis on Russia in Clinton's democracy promotion approach with, in Bouchet's words, Russia forming the 'cornerstone of democratic enlargement and the highest-profile instance of Clinton's democracy promotion' (Bouchet 2013a: 166). Support was provided to other former-communist states. For example, USAID distributed \$30 million in support for NGOs in Eastern Europe (Rieffer and Mercer 2005: 393). Some states received more consistent assistance, notably Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Kazakhstan (Bouchet 2013a: 168; Bosin 2012). However, at least in funding terms, Russia was prioritised, with Goldgeier and McFaul describing the administration as providing Russia with an 'enormous aid package (Goldgeier and McFaul 2003: 11). As Boucher (2015: 3) notes, in the 1990s US democracy promotion efforts on post-Soviet space focused primarily on Russia. However, as the breakdown of funding to Russia through the Freedom Support Act (FSA) on the following page indicates, while financial support was committed to democratisation, this was limited and usually came somewhat behind economic and security interests. Between 1992 and 1996 USAID, on average, allocated only six percent of its funds for Russia on US NGOs working on democracy assistance (Mendelson 2001: 82). It did form, however, a substantial portion of overall spending for democracy promotion.

**Table Three: Funds Budgeted for Freedom Support Act Assistance to Russia, Fiscal Years 1992-2000 (in \$ millions)**



Source: U.S. Department of State and GAO analysis.

Source: US Government Accountability Office (2000), *Foreign Assistance: International Efforts to Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results*, p.170.

In practice, as outlined, perceptions of Russia's trajectory, institutional practices and notions of Yeltsin's commitment to Westernisation meant that support for Russian democracy became entangled with support for Yeltsin (Goldgeier and McFaul 2003: 11). This, as Bouchet (2013a: 166-177) notes, led to a democracy promotion approach that broadly focused on support for the government and democracy assistance rather than seriously penalising Russia for democratic failings or highly public criticism. Indeed, Mendelson (2001: 70) suggests that the Clinton administration and organisations such as USAID tended to focus on success stories within Russia rather than highlight the problems and challenges. Despite this, there was a sense of paternalism in the approach, with one State Department official suggesting that the policy under Clinton was to 'teach' Russia how to become a capitalist and democratic country (Cohen 2000).

George W. Bush's approach was less consistent, had a greater focus on non-state actors, was more critical of the Russian government and reduced financial support for democratisation (USAID 2004: 539). Support for Russian democratisation had historically focused on government to government programmes but as Nicol (2006: 31-32) notes, under Bush it increasingly focused on government to society programmes. In 2002 Bush signed the *Russian Democracy Act*. The Act aimed to strengthen democratic government, civil society and independent media in Russia and its focus on non-state actors and, from the perspective of Russian policy-makers, lecturing tone meant that it was received negatively by Russian policy-makers (H.R. 2121, 107<sup>th</sup> Congress). While formalising commitment to democratisation in this way might indicate a commitment to promoting democracy other actions suggested otherwise. Despite Bush declaring that democracy aid to Russia from the FSA account would continue, democracy aid to Russia from FSA fell during the Bush era. In 1999 democracy aid to Russia from FSA reached approximately \$64 million but by 2003 this figure had fallen to \$33 million and continued to fall, the administration requesting only \$26 million for 2008 (although there was a spike in 2007) (Tarnoff 2007: 1&7). Indeed, McFaul and Goldgeier (2005) suggest that by 2005 many US democracy-assistance organisations had larger budgets for their activities in Armenia than Russia.

Importantly, there was also an increased emphasis on public criticism, or shaming, of the Russian government and pro-active meetings with Russian dissidents and civil society groups, although democracy remained a theme of public diplomacy with Russia. Despite the limits and potential dangers of shaming (Matlock 2010: 245&257), many US foreign-policy elites and democracy promotion organisations, including Council of Relations Senior Fellow Steven A. Cook (quoted in: McMahon 2009: 30), then Chairman of NED Vin Weber (2007) and then American Enterprise Institute scholar Joshua Muravchik (2009), considered it a valuable way to promote change by putting pressure on the government. Matthew Bryza, who covered the South Caucasus in the White House, reportedly emphasised the need to publicly demand Russia conform to 'the same rules as everyone else' (Stent 2014: 101). This was, as Black (2004: 24) notes, despite Putin warning on several occasions of the potential consequences of offending Russia. There are two specific points regarding

shaming and US-Russian relations that require noting. This thesis has emphasised that following the Cold War actors in the United States perceived the country to have a mandated world leadership role. It has also emphasised that Russian identity has been in flux since the end of the Cold War, with leaders striving to maintain the identity of a great power and to find Russia's place in the world. This has meant that the United States has needed, but failed, to send clear messages to Russia about how it is perceived and its relationship with the United States. As Bjorkman (2001) suggests, this can create potential barriers and have negative influences.

Democracy promotion and support for the non-Russian states in the post-Soviet space also had important consequences for US-Russian relations. As will be outlined, US support was often perceived in Russia to be an approach to undermine Russian interests and to further entrench US influence in the region, with democracy promotion, at least partly, serving as a smokescreen for more aggressive motivations – including the legitimisation of Western-backed regime change. While much of the support was influenced by real-time events, such as the Colour Revolutions and Russo-Georgian War, US funding for the region increased under Bush and, importantly, there was an increased emphasis, publicly stated, on incorporating states from the region into US dominated or Western institutions, such as NATO, and in publicly backing them in disputes with Russia in ideological terms.

## **Context**

There were several contextual factors that influenced US democracy promotion during the post-Soviet space. The first important contextual factor that can be seen to have potentially encouraged democracy promotion was the US-led GWOT. The GWOT, which became the central feature of the administration's foreign policy agenda (Monten 2005; Jervis 2003), explicitly linked security with ideology and was influenced (and justified) by the assumption that terrorists and terrorist sponsorship would come from failed or non-democratic states. These assumptions were clearly stated in core policy documents, including the 2002 *National Security Strategy* (White House 2002: v), the 2003 *National Security Strategy for Combating*

*Terrorism* (White House 2003: 3&23) and 2006 *National Security Strategy* (White House 2006: 3, 10-15&33). Furthermore, one of the most consistent narratives within US foreign policy was of supporting democracy, meaning that there was a pressure for policy to conform with pronounced principles.

A further factor that encouraged proactive democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space, and the approach employed, was the conservative and neoconservative influence within the administration, as analysts such as Marshall (2003), Mann (2004), Fukuyama (2004), Daalder Lindsay (2005) and Dorrien (2004) have addressed. While Chernus's suggestion in 2005 that 'foreign policy in the George W. Bush administration is dominated by the neoconservatives' is perhaps excessively simplified (Chernus 2005: 1234) (as Max Boot forcefully argued in 2004), they did have influence. As Dorrien (2004: 2) notes, early in Bush's first term more than twenty neoconservatives received high-ranking positions in the administration, including Paul Wolfowitz, Paula Dobriansky, Richard Perle and Peter W. Rodman. Hard-line conservatives, such as Cheney and Rumsfeld, shared many of the neoconservative positions, such as the expansion of US power. This was relevant because, although there is no uniform definition of neo-conservatism, key themes include a moral framing of international relations, the defence and promotion of US values (including democracy) to increase US security, an expansionist foreign policy and a belief in American responsibility for global order. This is significant because, as Dorrien points out, 'most neocons are universalistic democratizers' (Dorrien 2004: 5). Neoconservative influence was facilitated by two additional factors. As Monten (2005: 152) and Chernus (2006) outline, the strong material power base that the United States enjoyed during Bush's early years provided the means and opportunity for expansive foreign policies whilst the sense of vulnerability following 9/11 provided a significant opening and justification for the use of American power.

A third important contextual factor encouraging US democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space was domestic changes in several of the states in the region. In Russia, as noted in the thesis Introduction, the political system became increasingly centralised, with restrictions on civil society, as the decade progressed (Mendelson



2004; Sakwa 2005; McFaul and Stoner-Weiss 2008; Sestanovich 2008; OSCE 2004; Edwards, Kemp and Sestanovich 2006; Aslund 2007: 233-76). As will be outlined in detail below, in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan popular uprisings against incumbent regimes provided opportunities to provide support for apparent democratic reformers.

However, a significant factor that had the potential to curb some forms of US democracy promotion towards Russia, such as public criticism, was Russia's importance to US priorities. Despite a willingness to act unilaterally and carry out pre-emptive attacks, the scale of US ambition in the GWOT and the tactics employed meant that cooperation with partner states was important, such as intelligence sharing, military support and diplomatic influence. Russia was a key state in this regard as well as for other key US security interests. As Saunders notes (2003), the relationship was important to US national interests, including cooperation in the war in Afghanistan, the war of terrorism, non-proliferation, pursuing peace in the Middle East and utilising the UN Security Council to progress US national interests. Cross outlined that:

Russia's size, geographic location, nuclear/WMD capability, intelligence resources and diplomatic influence make it a critical player for orchestrating an effective world-wide campaign against terrorism (Cross 2006: 189).

While there was some degree of disinterest in Russia during the first few months of the Bush administration, following 9/11 (and in some cases before) many important US actors came to recognise Russia's importance. In February 2001 Condoleezza Rice (2001) spoke about the importance of a strong and prosperous Russia. During a joint press conference with Putin in June 2001, Bush stated that 'when Russia and United States work together in a constructive way, we can make the world a safer and more prosperous place' (Bush and Putin 2001). The 2002 US *National Security Strategy* outlined the importance of developing 'active agendas of cooperation' with

Russia following 9/11 and accepted that there was 'little of lasting consequence that the United States can accomplish in the world without the sustained cooperation of its allies and friends' and outlined that the ambition of developing a cooperative agenda with Russia (White House 2002: 25&28). A joint US-Russia declaration signed by Bush and Putin in May 2002 detailed that 'new global challenges and threats require a qualitatively new foundation for our relationship' and were 'partners' in the GWOT (Bush and Putin 2002). The 2003 US *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* highlighted Russia, alongside China, India and Pakistan, as important countries that the United States was recasting its relationship with in light of common concerns about terrorism (White House 2003: 20). In 2004 the State Department outlined that the United States had 'an overriding interest in cooperating with Russia on critical national security issues' (US Department of State 2004: 391). The 2006 US *National Security Strategy*, whilst noting domestic regressions, still emphasised the desire to 'work closely with Russia on strategic issues of common interest', outlining that:

Russia has great influence not only in Europe and its own immediate neighbourhood, but also in many other regions of vital interest to us: the broader Middle East, South and Central Asia, and East Asia (White House March 2006: 39).

Analytical elites across the political spectrum recognised the importance of Russia to US interests in the post-9/11 context. In October 2001 Daalder and Lindsay (2001), of the Brookings Institute, described Russia as having the potential to be 'particularly helpful' in achieving counter-terrorism goals, especially in relation to Iran. In February 2002 Jon Wolfshal, a deputy director at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, listed a series of issues on which Russian cooperation was important. These included counter-terrorism and nuclear security but it was in relation to Iran that he argued 'the true value of the US-Russian relationship can shine through' but was clear that in broader terms 'working with Russia and its allies, the United States can achieve a lot more than it can by working alone' (Wolfshal 2002). Testifying to the Congress Subcommittee on Europe in February

2002 McFaul described US-Russian relations as the one bright spot in the otherwise gloomy post-9/11 picture, suggesting that Russia had ‘the potential to become a strategic partner of the United States’ (McFaul 2002). Andrew Kuchins, of Carnegie, argued in May 2002 that strong US-Russian relations were ‘essential’ for the United States ‘to achieve many of its key foreign and security goals’ (Kuchins 2002). Even the Heritage Foundation, so often critical of Russia and which in March 2001 was urging a ‘mix of carrot and sticks’ to handle the ‘Russian bear’ (Cohen 2001), was by November 2002 urging Bush to pursue a ‘US-Russian strategic partnership’ (Cohen 2002). As the Introduction outlined, there remained tensions over conceptions of the international order and complicating relations with third party states. This became increasingly apparent as the decade developed over issues such as the war in Iraq, US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, support for further NATO enlargement, the Russo-Georgian War in 2008 and Russian support for ‘rogue states’, such as arms sales to Iran. Nevertheless, following 9/11 US actors came to increasingly recognise the cooperation Russia could provide as well as the challenges.

## **Ideational Legacy 1: Uncertainty about Russia’s Identity and Trajectory**

### ***Introduction***

Within this wider context two Cold War ideational legacies also influenced the US approach towards democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space. The first was conflicted and uncertain perceptions of Russia’s identity and political trajectory. Russian cooperation after 9/11 reinforced early post-Cold War narratives and expectations of Russia moving towards the West and being a willing, junior partner to the United States. Russia’s support fitted comfortably into Bush’s ‘with us or against us’ (Bush 2001b) approach in regards to GWOT – which itself, as Merrill (2006) and Sjøstedt (2007) suggest, had clear parallels with the Truman Doctrine. This was balanced against a retained historical mistrust of Russia on the part of some actors. This mistrust was further informed by Cold War experiences of competition, zero-sum framing and the view of Russia as a defeated enemy, more often considered a potential threat than partner and being expected to accept a US led international order. Both strands contributed to a tendency to over-emphasise the role

of ideology, already an entrenched feature of bilateral relations, in Russia's policy decisions and support for, or opposition to, US policies. This was evident not only in the approaches of some policy-makers but also the analysis of democracy promotion organisations whose origins stemmed from the Cold War. When, from 2003 onwards, Russia increasingly began to challenge the United States, actors often responded by framing Russian actions in familiar, historical ways, using Cold War metaphors and analogies or in black and white ideological terms that slotted comfortably into pre-existing intellectual structures. This reinforced lingering mistrust of Russia and the idea that the United States, as Cold War victor needed to, and be seen to, hold Russia to account.

These dual positions contributed to an inconsistent and disjointed approach towards democracy promotion in Russia and messaging around the importance that the United States placed on Russian democratisation. This was particularly problematic because, as outlined, Russia was not only still establishing its own post-Cold War identity and its relationship with the West but also had divergent strands within foreign policy circles, ranging from those favouring integration with the West to nationalists who perceived the United States as a threat. The approach was further hampered by the fact that the limited tangible democracy activities that did take place had distinct similarities to the tools and methods used during the Cold War, highlighting the influence of institutional origins and institutionalised expertise. In the 1990s Carothers rejected the notion that NED was a 'Cold War relic in principle' but asserted that such a framing is 'at least partly correct in fact' (Carothers 1994: 128). This seemed to remain the case in the 2000s.

### ***Cold War Influences***

Seven Cold War influences were particularly influential for this legacy. The first five stemmed from the understandings and experiences of the Cold War and its end outlined in Chapter Two. The first of these was the expectation for some US foreign policy actors, influenced by Cold War triumphalism and narratives of victory, that a defeated Russia would move closer to the West economically and ideologically. The

second Cold War influence was that Russia would (or would have to) support a US-led international agenda. These influences relate to US and Russian identities and the expected dynamic nature of bilateral relations and both states' respective roles. Perceived victory enhanced the already strong sense of US exceptionalism to influence a common discourse of not only the superiority of the US system, but also the unique role of the United States as global leader with universal values. This was particularly relevant in relation to Russia as it was the 'defeated' Cold War adversary.

The third broad Cold War influence relevant to this case was the historical experience and mindset of mistrusting Russia that, for some actors, continued into the post-Cold War era, particularly in times of uncertainty when actors reverted to historical framings. As outlined, this mistrust was not only institutionalised over decades through key internal planning and strategy documents but also evident in the statements of policy-makers. The fourth Cold War influence outlined in Chapter Two relevant to this case was institutionalised understandings of the Russian character as imperial and deceptive, as documents such as Kennan's Long Telegram suggested. Specific Cold War experiences, such as the Cuban missile crisis, amplified this mistrust of Russia. The final broad Cold War influence was the experience of viewing relations with Russia through the prism of ideology, based on forty-five years of ideological competition. As outlined earlier in the thesis, a core element of the way in which US actors understood the Cold War was as a zero-sum, ideological struggle. As such, documents such as the Long Telegram gave little consideration to Russian interests beyond those connected to ideology. Analysis of Soviet actions were analysed through the prism of ideological motivation in a way uncommon for traditional great power relations. This practice became entrenched and in the post-Cold War era US actors continued to pay a greater focus to ideology in Russia than other strategically important states and to analyse Russian actions and motivations through an ideological prism.

Two further relevant Cold War influences were also important. The first was that many of the organisations involved in democracy promotion in the post-Cold War era formed or greatly increased in size or influence during the Cold War. These organisations included Freedom House, NED and Human Rights Watch. As such the structure, origins and specialist expertise of these organisations were formed, or re-focused, in opposition to the USSR and with the institutional perspective of Russian being a threat. As Tsygankov and Parker (2015) have argued in respect to Freedom House, this contributed to mistrust of Russia in the post-Cold War era and also influenced an on-going reliance on Cold War era democracy promotion techniques. Similarly, many individuals influential in democracy promotion during the Cold War continued to lead the approach in the post-Cold War era. For example, Carl Gershman was appointed president of NED in 1984 and remained as president throughout the duration of George W. Bush's two terms. Furthermore, the fluid nature of employment between government and think-tanks also meant that many policy-makers who had forged their career during the Cold War enjoyed influential positions within the think-tank community. As Table Four shows, in the post-Cold War era many influential Freedom House officials and board members had national security ties and Cold War experience.

Related to this point about the importance of professional history and generation is that key members of the administration were policy-makers who had forged their careers in opposition to the Soviet Union (Lieven 2004a:151). Donald Rumsfeld served as Secretary for Defence under Ford and again under Bush between 2001 and 2006. Dick Cheney served under both Nixon and Ford before becoming Secretary of Defence from 1989 until 1993. He served as Vice-President under George W. Bush. Fenton and Feffer (2009) highlights that the 2005 ADVANCE Democracy Act was based on a book by Mark Palmer, who had been involved in the creation of NED and had written Reagan's famous 1982 address to the UK Parliament. As has been discussed, such elites were more likely to view US-Russian relations through a Cold War prism and rely on historical framings and stereotypes in times of uncertainty. This is particularly important considering the unsettled international context following 9/11 and the neoconservative ideologies of key policy-makers. Indeed,

neo-conservatism itself made its way into government during the Cold War (Chernus 2006; Dorrien 2004).

**Table Four: Partial List of Prominent FH Officials, 1991-2011: National Security Ties and Cold War Experience**

	FH Position	National Security Ties	Cold War Administrations
Kenneth Adelman	Board Member	Defense Policy Board, the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, CPD, PNAC	Reagan
Dennis C. Blair	Board Member	US Navy, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Intelligence	Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, G.W.H. Bush
Zbigniew Brzezinski	Board Member		Carter
Paula J. Dobriansky	Board Member	National Security Advisor	Reagan, G.W.H. Bush
Steve Forbes	Board Member	National Security Council, the US Information Agency, PNAC	Reagan
Samuel Huntington	Board Member	The Board of International Broadcasting, CPD, PNAC	Carter
Max Kampelman	Board Chairman	National Security Council	Reagan
Jean Kirkpatrick	Board Member	Chief Arms Control Negotiator, CPD, PNAC	Reagan
David J. Kramer	Executive Director, President	US Ambassador to the UN, CPD	G.W.H. Bush
Joshua Muravchik	Board Member	State Department, PNAC	-
Mark Palmer	Board Member	CPD	Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, G.W.H. Bush
Donald Rumsfeld	Board Member	State Department, CPD	Nixon, Ford
William H. Taft IV	Board Chairman		Reagan, G.W.H. Bush
Paul Wolfowitz	Board Member	Secretary of Defense, PNAC	Ford, Reagan
James Woolsey	President	Deputy Secretary of Defense, US Representative to NATO Arms Control & Disarmament Agency, State Department, Defense Department, PNAC Defense Department, CIA Director, CPD, PNAC	Carter, Reagan, G.W.H. Bush

PNAC (Project for the New American Century); CPD (Committee on the Present Danger)  
Source: Tsygankov and Parker (2015), p.90.



The second unique Cold War influence was the experience of publicly criticising the Soviet system, a feature of the Cold War. While, as will be outlined, there were limited means that could be used to directly encourage change in the Soviet Union, such as RFE and the introduction of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in 1974, the lack of access meant that shaming, by necessity, played a role in Cold War democracy promotions efforts towards Russia. Westad (2005: 357-359) details American, and particularly neoconservative, efforts in the 1970s and 1980s to condemn the practices of non-democratic states and the importance they placed on holding up the United States as a model to the world. Fischer reports that European allies quietly appealed to the Reagan administration to be 'less shrill' in its rhetoric and criticism (Fischer 2010: 274). As Matlock (2014) has suggested, at the end of the Cold War many neoconservatives attributed strong rhetoric as an important element of bringing change in the Soviet Union through pressure.

### *Influence of the Legacy During the Early Part of the 2000s*

This legacy influenced perceptions of Russia's democratic trajectory and analysis of its actions in ideological terms. This contributed to an over emphasis on ideology in regards to both cooperation and tension, which influenced inconsistent democracy promotion. In the early part of the decade, Russian support for several international US goals and activities (such as GWOT), contributed to, despite some concerns, a broadly positive interpretation of Russia's overall trajectory amongst many influential figures in the White House, including Bush. This increased hope that Russia was beginning to move towards a more democratic model (Wallander 2003; Colton and McFaul 2001). Some members of the Bush administration (and Bush particularly) applauded Russia's trajectory towards democracy during this early period and there was a conflation between Russian cooperation and a Russian commitment to move towards the West.

Praise for Russia and an emphasis on strong bilateral relations were, to some degree, influenced by realist concerns, with much of the foreign-policy community

recognising Russia's strategic value after 9/11, as outlined earlier (Sestanovich 2008: 13). The relative lack of criticism of Russian democratic deficits (Stent and Shevtsova 2002: 125) during this period, however, might suggest, and may have communicated to Russian officials, that Russian democratisation was a low US priority. This is particularly so when one considers that, despite positive overtones from Bush and some administration members, many key administration and foreign policy figures displayed attitudes towards Russia bordering on either disinterest or distrust prior to 9/11 (see, Rice 2001, US Department of Defense 2001; Perlez and Risen 2001).

However, policy towards Russia was also influenced by specific assumptions concerning Russia's political trajectory and its relationship with the United States. As Henry Hale (2005: 134) suggests, comparative political science has failed to sufficiently explain or predict post-communist dynamics because it tends to interpret these dynamics as evidence of a trajectory towards or away from ideal endpoints (see also Levitsky and Way 2002; Linz and Stephan 2011). That the USSR was, for so long, the 'evil' endpoint, coupled with the early optimism for Russia's trajectory in the early 1990s, meant that Russia's transformation was particularly susceptible to this tendency, as detailed in Chapter Three, and the same assumptions, to a lesser degree, were made under the Bush administration during the early 1990s. Putin's cooperation conformed to early post-Cold War assumptions that Russia would follow US leadership and this influenced the overall perception of a positive, western-orientated trajectory. Mankoff suggests that conventional wisdom in late 2001 and 2002 was that Russia had made a, 'fundamental civilizational choice to be part of the West' and that some in the White House interpreted Russia's cooperation as a shift in its external orientation (Mankoff 2007: 131-132). Goldgeier and McFaul also argue that optimism was high that Russia had decided that 'it truly belonged in the West' (Goldgeier and McFaul 2003: 2).

Russian cooperation and wider views of its political trajectory were closely linked, with the two often presented in tandem by policy-makers. In July 2001 Rumsfeld had declared that Russia needed to decide whether its future lay with the West or not

- three months later he described Putin as a 'stalwart' (Garamone 2001). In December 2001 Bush described Russia as being 'in the midst of a transition to free markets and democracy' (Bush 2001c). The 2002 *National Security Strategy* stated that not only was Russia a 'partner in the war on terror' but that it was also 'in the midst of a hopeful transition, reaching for its democratic future', and suggested that there had been a 'critical change in Russian thinking' (White House 2002: 26). The 2002 *Nuclear Posture Review* asserted that there were 'no sources of ideological conflict with Moscow' (US Department of Defense 2002: 17). During Congressional debates in October 2002, concerning assistance to Russia under FSA, Congressman Tom Lantos (a co-sponsor of the bill), despite highlighting several concerns, praised Russia and related cooperation to ideology, stating that 'Putin made the courageous decision to make common cause with the Western democracies in defeating terrorism' (US Congressional Record HR 19350 2002). In June 2002 the United States formally recognised Russia as a market economy (Sakwa 2004: 232). In May 2002 the two presidents made a joint pledge to build a new strategic partnership (Bush and Putin 2002). In September 2003 Bush simultaneously described the United States and Russia as 'allies in the war on terror' and praised Putin's 'vision for a country in which democracy, freedom and the rule of law thrived' (Bush and Putin 2003). Even some think-tanks traditionally critical of Russia changed their tone following post-9/11 cooperation. In early February 2003 Ariel Cohen, from the Heritage Foundation, expressed hope that the United States and Russia could become 'friends not only because we have common enemies, but because we have basic, common democratic and economic values' (Cohen 2003). Post 9/11 Russian cooperation thus contributed to a view that Russia's future might indeed lie with the West. This contributed to, in Mendelson's words, the West putting Putin 'in the box marked liberal internationalist' as a consequence of his cooperation despite 'well documented assaults on reforms' (Mendelson January 2004), including an increased centralisation of power, free but unfair elections and repression of journalists and civil society (Belin 2004; Carman 2002; McFaul, Petrov and Ryabov 2004; Sakwa 2005).

The administration's broadly positive narrative of Russia's trajectory, along with the noted desire for Russian cooperation, influenced democracy promotion towards

Russia. While diplomatic discussions continued, tangible elements such as funding were reduced, whilst verbal and symbolic strands, including shaming, were relatively minor, particularly from Bush. In 2003 the administration decided to phase out FSA aid to Russia. While this partly reflected budgetary constraints, it was also, according to Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, Charles Ries, informed by the view that Russia had made considerable progress towards market and democratic reform (Ries 2003). The limited levels of democracy promotion in Russia and tendency to praise Russia's international role and political trajectory contributed to an upturn in relations, reflected in the positive comments of Russian officials and tangible cooperation, including over Iran and North Korea (Mankoff 2007: 131). However, as Mendelson (2002: 41-43) suggests, it also potentially communicated the message that if Russia cooperated on practical issues its domestic situation would be an internal matter and that Russian democratisation was not a key priority for the administration. Certain US decisions, such as declining to co-sponsor a UN Commission on Human Rights resolution on Chechnya, perpetuated this signal (Saunders 2003).

While Cold War-influenced expectations for Russia's role and the practice of viewing relations through the prism of ideology contributed to an overly-positive assessment, and public endorsement, of Russia's democratisation, the practical assistance that was provided had similarities to Cold War approaches, despite the upturn in relations. The 2002 *Russian Democracy Act* highlights the similarities between Cold War and post-Cold War democracy promotion and the assumption that the United States had a specific duty to hold Russia to account and to 'teach' Russia about democracy. The act stated that Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Voice of America should cooperate with local independent media within Russia to disseminate information about democracy, free-market economies and human rights throughout Russia (HR 2121 2002: 5). First airing in 1950, RFE/RL aimed to provide 'a "megaphone" behind the iron curtain'. (RFE/RL 2010). In 2002 NED funded assessments of draft laws pertaining to human rights and NGOs with recommendations for how civic actors should respond, supported the distribution of information regarding violations against journalist rights, produced curriculum for schools on democracy and funded the publication of articles criticising 'state efforts

to control civil society' (NED 2002: 48-51). The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused the 2002 act (and wider democracy promotion) of 'bordering on interference in our internal affairs' and suggested that legislators had failed to recognise that the United States and Russia were 'two absolutely equal great democratic states' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation 2002). As Black (2004: 172) notes, there was considerable consternation within Russia when, in April 2002, RFE/RL began to broadcast to the North Caucasus (from Turkey) in local languages.

This seemingly contradictory approach to democracy promotion in Russia, where the administration's rhetoric and funding levels implied a positive analysis but the nature of tangible democracy promotion suggested otherwise, was reflective of the mixed views of Russia and its trajectory within the administration and wider foreign policy community as well as institutionalised differences and expertise. Indeed, Congressional concerns regarding a perceived lack of democratisation in Russia led to higher levels of FSA aid to Russia than requested by the president (Nicol 2006: 34). Senator Biden criticised the administration for being 'silent' about how Putin had 'reversed the course of democratic development and the rule of law in Russia' (US Congressional Record – Senate 2005: S518) and Congress also refused to repel the Jackson-Vanik amendment. Organisations focused on democracy were often also far more critical than the administration. Freedom House changed Russia's *Freedom in the World* rating from 4.5 to 5 in 2001 and retained it for 2002, the same year that the administration praised Russia for reaching for its democratic future (Freedom House 2001, 2002). As such mixed messages regarding US perceptions of Russia were common. While such organisations were more critical than the administration this should not be over-emphasised. As Mendelson (2002: 37) noted in 2002, there had been relatively little debate among analytical elites about Russia which afforded the administration a fairly free hand in setting policy.

Criticism that was aimed at Russia, however, still often made use of Cold War analogies and metaphors and focused primarily on ideology when analysing controversies. The Yukos Affair and imprisonment of Khodorkovsky in 2005 on charges of fraud and tax evasions, a decision many analysts viewed as politically

motivated in order to undermine challenge to Putin's rule, is an example. Some actors explicitly compared it to Cold War practices, with Congressional Helsinki Commission Co-Chair Christopher Smith referring to the affair as being reminiscent to 'Soviet show trials' (Nichol 2006: 36). While some analysts provided nuanced analysis (Hill 2003), many analysts (see: Freedom House 2005) framed the affair exclusively as an oppressive state silencing a dissenting voice rather than giving consideration to oligarchs' privileges, rigged privatisation and questionable business practices, detailed by scholars such as Freeland (2000) and Hoffmann (2002). Similarly, think-tanks reinforced the anti-democracy narrative by providing platforms to anti-Kremlin critics. For instance, Leonid B. Nevzlin, the controlling shareholder of Yukos, told an audience at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace that under Putin democracy in Russia had 'effectively ended' and a 'Soviet-like regime' installed (Nevzlin 2005).

Despite there being a somewhat mixed approach to democracy promotion during the early part of the decade, overall the approach of the administration in downplaying Russia's democratic regression contributed to an improvement in US-Russian relations whilst also potentially undermining the message that Russian democratisation was a priority. By March 2004 then Assistant Secretary of State Elizabeth A. Jones was able to note that Russia was, 'cooperating with us to an extent that previously would have been unimaginable' (Jones 2004b). While this approach was influenced by a range of factors, including realist considerations, Russia's conformity to a number of post-Cold War expectations also appeared to play a role.

### ***Democracy Promotion in the Mid and Latter Part of the Decade***

Although democracy promotion efforts towards Russia remained mixed and a low priority compared to other agendas (in terms of funding), in the mid and latter part of the decade it did harden, with an increased focus on diplomatic pressure and shaming, a small spike in funding for non-state actors and higher profile engagement and support for civil society within Russia. This was, in part, a consequence of the

negative ideological trends within Russia. As such criticism was not necessarily unwarranted. However, there are three important nuances in relation to Russia's political status. The first is that the increased centralisation of power and repressions on civil society were continuations of existing domestic trends and not a lurching shift. Even *Freedom in the World* reports rated Russia as 5.5 out of 7 consistently between 2005 and 2008 (between 2000 and 2004 it had been rated at 5) which both indicates a slip rather than a dramatic lurch and emphasises the existing problems prior to 2003 (Freedom House 2005-2008). As such, criticism should already have been taking place if the government policy was to hold non-democratic practices to account. Secondly, as will be outlined, there were other strategic states with similar systems with which the United States had close relations. Finally, despite concerning trends, considerable progress had still been made in Russian domestic politics since the end of the Cold War, such as the institutionalisation of elections (McFaul and Ryabov 2004: 20; US Department of State 2007: 133). As some analysts suggest, seen in the broader historical context, Russia had made 'considerable progress toward a democratic system' (Kramer 2003: 332) was not clearly 'going in the wrong direction' (Trenin 2006: 2).

As such, democratic set-backs may not have fully informed the hardening of the democracy promotion approach. Post-Cold War expectations of Russia conforming to US global leadership and the close perceived connection between Russia's role and its identity ensured that both cooperation and tensions remained overly-ideologised as well as stoking the perception of some actors that the United States needed to hold Russia to account as the defeated Cold War power. This was buttressed by some analysis of Russia that was exaggerated or made 'sweeping claims' based on a few high profile examples (Javeline and Lindernann-Komarova 2010: 171-172). Russia's increased push-back against US global aims and its own independent foreign policy (fuelled by concerns regarding US foreign policy, competing interests and a far stronger economic position) thus influenced perceptions of its overall trajectory, including an increased focus on its democratic trajectory. Rather than recognise Russian interests and challenges, many US foreign policy elites were quick to equate Russia's opposition to the US-led intervention in Iraq, reversal of the decision to accept US military bases in Central Asia and support

for incumbent governments during the Colour Revolutions, with democratic reversal rather than slippage, conflating perceived anti-US policies with anti-democratic trends. As Saunders (2003) suggests, Russian opposition to the war in Iraq was a shock to many in the United States whilst, for others, it confirmed standing suspicions.

Russian policy was increasingly explained in ideological terms, with many media outlets and think-tanks, particularly right-leaning ones, presenting Russian policies that clashed with US interests as being anti-democratic and representing a collapse into autocracy or imperialism. This reflected the tendency to view Russia's trajectory in extreme end points. In February 2005 Bruce P. Jackson, President of the Project on Transitional Democracies at Project for the New American Century, presented Russia as destabilising to US interests and to democracy in the post-Soviet region, suggesting that rather than simply being a dictatorial state, Russia was best understood as an 'anti-democratic state' (Jackson 2005). In November 2006 Bret Stephens, a member of *The Wall Street Journal's* editorial board and former editor of the neoconservative magazine *Commentary*, suggested that it was 'time we start thinking of Vladimir Putin's Russia as an enemy of the United States' and accused Russia's foreign policy of being 'often gratuitously, hostile to the US' which he blamed partly on anti-Americanism and a desire to expand its sphere of influence (Stephens 2006). Such was the perceived connection between Russian actions and ideology that there were widespread references among analysts to a new Cold War (see: Bugajski 2004; MacKinnn 2007; Lucas 2008). Such views responded to Russian regressions. However, it did so in a simplified form that failed to sufficiently recognise domestic developments in Russia, such as the creation of a Public Chamber made up of NGOs in 2005 to discuss draft laws, and instead used historical framings to focus on end-points. As scholars including Lieven (2004c, 2007: 17), Javeline and Lindermann-Komarova (2010), Treisman (2011), Sakwa (2011) and Tsygankov and Parker (2015) have outlined, such mixed developments made Russia a hybrid regime or dual state - rather than a return to a Soviet system.



The failure of the anticipated Russian democratic transformation influenced the analysis and discourse of democracy promoters, which also highlighted a focus on end-points and reliance on Cold War analogies and references. In 2005 the Director of Eurasia Programs at the International Republican Institute argued, in a testimony to Congress, that the United States should push-back on Russian authoritarianism, which was perceived to be undermining the efforts of the early 1990s to ‘create a society dedicated to the ideals of democracy, a free and open economy, and adherence to the rule of law’ (Nix 2005). Freedom House frequently framed their analysis within Cold War analogies and comparisons. Explaining the decision to downgrade Russia to ‘Not Free’, Freedom House suggested that Russia’s ‘retreat from freedom marks a low point not registered since 1989’ and warned of ‘a dangerous and disturbing drift toward authoritarianism in Russia’ (Freedom House 2004). Freedom House Vice-President Arch Puddington suggested that:

Putin has drawn extensively, and shrewdly, from the old Soviet system to build what is increasingly looking like a new model of authoritarian rule [...] Putin's Russia most closely resembles the Soviet Union of Leonid Brezhnev (Puddington 2006).

The analysis and increased shaming by democracy promotion organisations was matched by stronger support, tangible and symbolic, for anti-Putin movements and civil society actors. This reflected the sense of Cold War-informed superiority and universal applicability of US values and ideas. Policy-makers and government-funded organisations increased funding and symbolic support to opposition groups and NGOs and put increased pressure on the Putin administration through shaming tactics. In 2006 government officials participated in the ‘Other Russia’ conference, Bush held a roundtable with Russian NGOs, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs met with civil society leaders to discuss the state of democracy in Russia, whilst the Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian affairs met with democratic opposition groups (US Department of State 2007: 134). As Tsygankov (2009a: 58) highlights, US Defense Department advisor Richard Perle called for Russia to be expelled from the G8 following Khodorkovsky’s arrest in 2003, as McCain did in

2006. In 2006 Cheney accused Russia of trying to ‘reverse the gains of the last decade’ in relation to democracy and suggested that it could still be partner if it comes to share the values of the democratic community’ (Cheney 2006). That Cheney soon followed this speech up with praise for Kazakhstan’s ‘economic development as well as political development’ only fuelled Russian concerns that democracy promotion was targeted competitively against Russia (Stent 2014: 140). Indeed, Hart (2007) suggests that Cheney proposed overt support for Putin’s domestic opponents. Prominent government officials, including Colin Powell and then Ambassador to Russia Alexander Vershbow, wrote articles critical of Russia’s trajectory and of Putin’s actions in a variety of Russian newspapers (US Department of State 28 March 2005: 143-144).

During times of uncertainty Cold War framings reinforced retained mistrust and contributed to excessively simplified analysis and a tendency to view relations primarily through the prism of ideology – contributing to US oscillations in understandings of Russia. This influenced democracy promotion approaches. Elizabeth A. Jones admitted in 2004 that, ‘Cold War stereotypes and reflexes still persist on both sides’ (Jones 2004b). There was an increased emphasis on supporting Russian non-state actors with the express purpose, as the FY 2007 FSA budget request explained, to act as a ‘necessary check on the power of central government’, based on the concern about the ‘commitment of Russia’s leadership to building genuine democratic institutions’ (US Department of State 2006: 432). In 2004/05 the State Department worked to strengthen regional broadcast media in Russia, training more than 1,600 media professionals, in order to address increased control of the media by the Kremlin. The department also supported Russian NGOs in court while hits on a US-supported human rights website jumped from 1,400 in 2003 to 67,000 in 2004 (US Department of State 2005: 144-146). In 2006/07 the United States funded an anti-corruption coalition that advised on loopholes in draft legislation and publicly evaluated local officials on their activities (US Department of State 2007: 136).

The US Embassy in Moscow arranged numerous events for Russian audiences that highlighted the sense that the United States needed to teach democracy to Russia. These included presentations on how the US government interacts with the media and on US elections and thousands of books on democracy were distributed (US Department of State 2005: 144). Many of the actions of other organisations reflected this sense of superiority and were seen as inflammatory by many Russian policy-makers. In 2007 NED funded legal assistance to NGOs ‘under pressure from the authorities’, conducted capacity building for workers to conduct campaigns, ran a competition in Russian schools for the best lesson plan on the history of totalitarianism and political repression in Russia and funded publications on Duma voting patterns in relation to democracy and human rights (NED 2007). In 2008 the organisation’s funding of activities in Russia included a series of contests for Russian history teachers to create lesson plans on topics including human rights and the dissident movement, which could then be shared with other teachers, a travelling exhibit of human rights in Russia and political repression in the USSR, support for organisations under pressure from Russian authorities and training for youth human rights activists (NED 2008).

Several analysts, such as former US diplomat Dale Herspring, US coordinator of the Committee on Eastern Europe and NATO Ira Straus and Director of the Daiwa Institute for Research Vlad Sobell, urged focus on more pressing strategic priorities where Russian cooperation was essential and argued that public criticism was undermining this aim by alienating Russia (Lavelle 2004). Indeed, while untypical for many Republicans, in 2004 Congressman Curt Weldon argued that excessive criticism of Russia and failure to recognise its interests were denying the United States the leverage to encourage democratic change in Russia (US Congressional Record – House 2004: H7435). While others contested this point, in the context of falling funding and the need for greater cooperation the argument had logic. McFaul (2008: 49) estimates that FSA support for Russian democratisation halved between 2000 and 2008. As the table below highlights, even though democratisation assistance increased as a percentage of funding for Russia, the amounts steadily fell, even as concerns about Russian domestic politics intensified.

**Table Five: US Democratisation Aid to Russia (\$ millions)**

<b>Budgeted FY1992-FY2005<sup>a</sup> (Freedom Support Act and Agency funding)</b>	<b>Budgeted FY2005<sup>b</sup> (Freedom Support Act and Agency funding)</b>	<b>Estimated FY2006<sup>c</sup> (Freedom Support Act and Agency funding)</b>	<b>Requested FY2007<sup>a</sup> (Function 150 funding) <sup>e</sup></b>
1,097.67	62.95	45.2	29.78
7.9% <sup>d</sup>	6.3%	4.8%	46.6%

Source: Nicol (2006: 32).

The response of Russian leaders to such criticism highlighted the negative impacts democracy promotion could have. In response to criticism from Powell regarding government re-organisation in Russia, Lavrov declared that it was an internal affair and that the United States should not attempt to impose its own model on others (Nicol 2006: 9). The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs branded the US Record 2005 report an ‘obvious distortion of the facts and represents an example of outright double standards towards human rights practices’ (Kamynin 2006) and, responding to the 2006 report, declared that, ‘the United States approves of the human rights situation in those countries that follow US foreign policy, and criticizes those that fall out of step’ (JRL 2007: 86). In 2004 Putin accused the United States of ‘instructing others how to live their lives’ and in 2006 complained that the United States ‘is not about to listen to anyone’ and that the United States was not engaging Russia ‘on terms of mutual equality and mutual respect’ (quoted in Larson and Shevchenko 2010: 91). At the 2007 Munich Conference on Security Policy he accused the United States of seeking global dominance through a system which has ‘nothing in common with democracy’ and of lecturing Russia about democracy without learning themselves (Putin 2007). While there may have been calculated domestic reasons for taking a strong stand against the United States, that such sentiments translated into action, such as increased competition for influence in Central Asia, indicates a degree of genuine sentiment. Democracy promotion efforts can be considered to have not only placed additional strain on bilateral relations but also contributed to increased ideological antagonism and discursive challenge,

expressed through the concept of ‘sovereign democracy’ – a firm statement that Russia’s path to democracy was an internal matter, and should be free of external influence (it was also partly in response to the Colour Revolutions, which are addressed below) (Averre 2007; Makarychev 2008; *Wall Street Journal* 2006; Evans 2008). Some analysts have characterised this as a deliberate attempt to thwart democracy promotion within Russian and surrounding states (Ambrosio 2009; Fawn 2009).

While the general tone towards Russia was more critical there were still high level examples of the Russian democratic trajectory being applauded. During a joint press conference in February 2005, George W. Bush, although noting that he had emphasised the importance of democracy to Putin, praised Russia’s ‘tremendous progress over the last 15 years’, hailed evidence of Putin’s ‘absolute support for democracy in Russia’, declared that Russia was not turning back on its democratic progress and even referred to the freedoms enjoyed by the press corps in Russia (White House 2005a). This was approximately one year after Congress’s Consolidated Appropriations for FY2004 stated that Congress was ‘gravely concerned with the deterioration and systematic dismantling of democracy and the rule of law’ in Russia (Congressional Record – House 2003: 31560). This contrast highlights both the unwarranted optimism stemming from cooperation and the excessively severe criticism of Russian domestic politics displayed during the period, and subsequent mixed messages. It also highlights how the decentralised nature of democracy promotion, when combined with institutionalised attitudes of opposition, could undermine efforts to improve relations. For instance, Congress refused to repeal the Jackson-Vanik Amendment for Russia despite Bush’s assurances to Russian leaders. The range of actors signalling contrasting messages added to the confused state of US democracy promotion towards Russia.

### ***Russia as a Special Case***

In 1999 Diamond (1999: 273) emphasised the challenges of democracy promotion and warned against assumptions that democratic consolidation would necessarily

follow transition. Carothers (1999: 352) also warned that while democracy should be idealistic it needed to be tempered by realist considerations. As Trenin notes, ‘undercutting Russia on issues important to Moscow while seeking Russian cooperation on issues important to Washington just does not make sense’ (Trenin 2008: 121). However, the United States did just this, with Cold War legacies contributing to Russia being treated as a special case, particularly in terms of the shaming elements of democracy promotion. Despite Russia’s push-back it remained strategically important to many US foreign policy goals. Despite this US actors employed a democracy promotion approach that lacked the same degree of realism or consistency displayed to other key states such as China, as analysts including Lieven (2004c), Ignatius (2004: 27), Rieffer and Mercer (2005: 399), Carothers (2007a: 4) Lynch (2013: 187-188) and Simes (2007: 50) suggest. At the same time the approach displayed a general lack of interest in, or recognition of, Russian interests and the challenges it faced whilst failing to match Russia’s compromises based on the assumption that Russia should be following a US-led international agenda. The emphasis on shaming and support for non-state actors is particularly surprising when, as has been highlighted, the levels of funding and other democracy promotion sources were relatively low. Seen holistically, a semi-realist framework was often twinned with antagonistic rhetoric and symbolism – particularly detrimental when dealing with a state seeking to find and reassert its identity on the world stage and desperate for respect.

An effective balance was difficult to strike with Russia compared to some other states. As Rohrabacher, making an argument that differed dramatically from the typical Republican position, suggested to the Committee on Foreign Affairs:

When you compare what the Russians have done to democratize and no democracy at all in China [...] [t]he Russians are being portrayed as our enemy, the Chinese as our friend, yet the Chinese are the ones with the totalitarian state. This double-standard is not being missed in Moscow (HR110-221 2008: 29).

In 2008 Democrat Congressman Brad Sherman argued that at a time when the United States needed Russia's support US policy had actually been 'unthinkingly and reflexively anti-Russian' (HR110-221 2008: 6).

The majority of the conditionality clauses that form part of FSA funding were aimed at Russia (Tarnoff 2007: 9). The inconsistent concern for democracy and human rights was not missed in Russia. As Putin declared in 2006, 'how quickly all the pathos of the need to fight for human rights and democracy is laid aside the moment the need to realise one's own interests comes to the fore' (Bowker 2008: 163). China was ranked lower on all main democracy indexes during this period (other than FH) but did not receive such public criticism and enjoyed better trade relations. There were no acts comparable with the 2002 *Russian Democracy Act* for China and Pakistan - other strategically important states – despite both scoring similar or worse than Russia on democracy ratings across this period.

**Table Six: Western Analysis of Russian and Chinese Democracy**

	FH		Polity IV		EIU	
	Russia	China	Russia	China	Russia	China
2005	Not Free	Not Free				
2006	Not Free	Not Free				
2007	Not Free	Not Free			Hybrid Regime  (Rank 102)	Authoritarian Regime  (Rank 138)
2008	Not Free	Not Free			Hybrid Regime  (Rank 107)	Authoritarian Regime  (Rank 136)
2009	Not Free	Not Free	Open-Anaocracy	Institutionalized autocratic regime		

Sources: Freedom House (2005-2009), <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2005>; Marshall and Cole. Global Report Series: Conflict, Governance and State Fragility. Reports 2009, <http://www.systemicpeace.org/peace.htm> and EIU, Democracy Index.

One should not overstretch the point of criticism to Russia being unique as many European states were also critical of Russia's democratic regressions, although this of course varied considerably between European states. Poland, for instance, was far more critical than Germany. However, as a Council on Foreign Relations sponsored taskforce report points out, the United States had generally, at least until after 2006, been more critical than European allies and more focused on Russian domestic policy (Edwards, Kemp and Sestanovich 2006: 3). Indeed, right-leaning US analysts accused Europe of ignoring Russia's 'distorted' system' (Puddington 2012). Similarly, as will be outlined, the United States was far more supportive of policies likely to alienate Russia, such as NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia – proposals opposed by leading European nations such as Germany. This fits into the



trend of the United States swinging more wildly than Europe in terms of how it views Russia.

Overall, the influence of legacy one meant that throughout the period under focus democracy promotion received only limited financial backing yet, in the latter part of the decade, shaming was extremely strong for some key actors within the foreign policy community – with a tendency to over stress the ideological component of tensions and frame issues in terms of black and white end-points, ignoring the complexities of Russia's transition and the mixed nature of its system. This was in contrast to a generally positive analysis of Russia's trajectory in the early part of the decade which contributed to the low level of tangible democracy promotion. This enhanced a perception in Russia of US double standards and using the language of democracy for instrumental rather than genuine reasons. Russian consternation regarding the US approach was further fuelled by the fact that the limited tangible democracy promotion that did take place had strong parallels to the approach employed towards the Soviet Union or frequently drew on Soviet history, which highlighted an entrenched mistrust and inclination to treat Russia as a special case based on historical experiences and pre-arranged intellectual structures. This was reinforced by the fact that many of the organisations and policy-makers had developed their expertise during the Cold War and democracy promotion had become institutionalised in opposition to the Soviet Union.

## **Ideational Legacy 2: A Historically Informed Assumed Democratic Trajectory for the non-Russian Post-Soviet States**

### ***Introduction***

The second ideational legacy was an assumed democratic trajectory for parts of the non-Russian post-Soviet space, with a specific leadership role in the region for the United States. While US leaders spoke about the universality of American values generally after the Cold War, their assumptions about democratic trajectory and the US role were felt particularly keenly in this region, most notably Georgia and Ukraine. This was based on a common perception of the break-up of the Soviet

Union being, partly, the consequence of the United States supporting the liberation of oppressed states, from an imperial Russian centre, into a community of democracies. As part of the former Soviet Union these states were, in the view of some actors, at the centre of the democratic revolution and part of a new Europe whole and free.

This legacy had three specific influences on US democracy promotion. Firstly, it contributed to expectations for democracy in the region that shaped the nature and degree of democracy promotion efforts. Secondly, it contributed to simplistic framings of political changes and many US actors seized on apparent democratic ‘hooks’ (Stewart 2009b: 806) with a vigour and discourse that undermined other strategic interests – in this case US-Russian relations. Finally, many US actors viewed tensions between Russia and Ukraine and Georgia in excessively ideological terms, relying on historical analogies and framed these tensions as being between democratic states and an aggressive Russia. This encouraged a policy of reflexively siding with states experiencing tensions with Russia on the grounds of defending democracy and criticising perceived negative Russian influence in the region without necessary regard for the nuances of events. These three factors served to further delegitimise US democracy promotion from the perspective of Russian officials and added additional tension to the US-Russian relationship by increasing Russian fears of encirclement and that regime change could become an international norm, with the Kremlin feeling threat to its own position (Carothers 2006; Duncan 2013; Stent 2014: 101). This, in turn, contributed to, or was used to legitimise, further centralisation of power within Russia.

### ***Cold War Influences***

There were five important Cold War influences for this legacy. The first was the expectation at the end of the Cold War that, as the region where the Cold War was won, many of the non-Russian states in the post-Soviet space would have a strong democratic trajectory. Chapter Three detailed the prominent narrative of a Europe whole and free and expectations of democratisation in the region, with references to

future NATO membership for Ukraine. As with many US actors being less trusting of Russia than European states were, US perceptions towards non-Russian post-communist states were, as Kopstein (2006: 86-87) notes, often more optimistic than many Western European states. This reflects the expectation for the global spread of democracy outlined earlier but this expectation was especially strong for Europe, with the breakaway of the satellite states and then the disintegration of the Soviet Union being framed as the liberation of captive nations who could now return to Europe and join the West. This was a clear difference from the framing of defeat that was assigned by some to Russia.

This expectation for democratisation was not considered to be the case for all post-communist states. As Tarnoff (2007: 9) notes, there was little expectation that the Central Asian states were likely to transform in the short term (though this was later revised in relation to Kyrgyzstan). However, it was considered the case specifically for many of the Baltic states and much of the South Caucasus. By the time the Soviet Union disintegrated a number of former communist states, including Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, were progressing towards democracy, giving credibility to the view that former socialist states would become democratic, free-market economies. Alongside the historical narratives, addressed earlier, common amongst policy-makers', of 'a whole Europe, a free Europe' (Bush 1992e), the analysis of key individuals within think-tanks and democracy promotion organisations also centred on the theme of these states emerging from repression to join the democratic community. Future Freedom House President Adrian Karatnycky focused on repressed states within a Russian empire being liberated and moving towards democracy (Karatnycky and Morrow 1990). The Brookings Institute President, Bruce K MacLaury, in 1991, when reflecting on the changes occurring in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union suggested that, 'reform politicians throughout the region are committed to developing constitutional democracies and market economies' (MacLaury 1991: vii). Such was the optimism for the region that in 1992 (their first full year of independence), Freedom House rated eleven of the newly-independent states as partly free, despite the difficulties of transition (Puddington 2012). As outlined earlier, senior policy-makers, including Bush, regularly outlined their confidence of the region's democratic trajectory.

The second Cold War influence, outlined in Chapter Two, was the narrative that the United States, having ‘won’ the Cold War, had played an important leadership role in the liberation of oppressed peoples and now had a special role to play in the transformation of the post-Soviet states. As the previous chapter demonstrated, the interpretation of legitimate and necessary US leadership was acutely felt for Europe. The precedent for supporting former communist countries, free of Russian control, towards democracy was set with the SEED Act in 1989. The Final Report of the Eighty-first American Assembly, held in April 1992, suggested that ‘a US lead is imperative [...] no coherent response to the challenges of the former Soviet Union is on the cards without a US lead’ (Eighty-first American Assembly 1992: 14-1). George H. W. Bush assessed in 1992 that, ‘the demand for American leadership [in the region was] never more compelling’ (Bush 1992e).

The third Cold War influence was outlined in Chapter Two – the Cold War perception of an imperial Russian character and the assumption that Russia could not be trusted. These entrenched ideas, as outlined earlier, were consistent themes across the course of the Cold War. Russia’s relations with its satellites and smaller Soviet republics were framed as an imperial centre dominating captive nations. This links to the understandings of the Soviet break-up as the captive nations being ‘set free’ (Bush 1992e). Tensions between Russia and other states were frequently understood in black and white ideological and moral terms and support reflexively assigned to the non-Russian state. For example, as Merrill (2006: 33) notes, Truman described Greece as a ‘free nation’ and a ‘democratic nation’ despite its problems with human rights and corruption. As will be outlined, Cold War analogies and parallels were often drawn by US actors in response to tensions in the post-Soviet space which influenced a reliance on entrenched responses in terms of attempting to undermine Russian influence in order to defend or promote democratic change, with non-Russian post-Soviet states closely aligned with the liberated states of Eastern Europe.

The two remaining Cold War influences relate to organisational experiences. Firstly, as Carothers and Ottoway (2000b: 7) note, during the Cold War it was, by necessity and practicality, the communist world where ‘friendly tyrants’ were not potential partners and where civil society groups were financially and diplomatically supported. This means that as well as the ideational legacy of the region’s presumed trajectory there was also institutional experience and habits of supporting pro-democracy groups that may have buttressed the over-arching approach. By the end of the 1980s NED’s primary focus was Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and in 1992 the organisation outlined that of all the regions experiencing democratisation, it was ‘particularly important in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union’ (NED 1992: 1213). The extent of attempts to promote democracy or regime change in the ‘captive nations’ should not be over-stated. Matlock recalls meeting representatives from the Baltic states asking for support in moving for autonomy and independence, and warning them that if things went wrong the United States could not help them, and could not risk war over their independence. He told them that, ‘if they crush, we can’t stop them and you can’t expect us to’ (Matlock 2015). Nevertheless, efforts were made to support these states and Matlock himself suggests that speeches of support to states like Latvia had a role in their inspiring their ultimate liberation (Matlock 2010: 55).

Secondly, as has been noted, many of the key democracy promotion organisations, such as NED and Freedom House, developed or expanded during the Cold War and it was in opposition to the USSR that many of the democracy promotion activities and organisations began their work. As such, not only did many of these organisations form with an institutional perception of Russia as an imperial threat but their original missions and expertise focused on states under Russian influence. Furthermore, some analysts have argued that democracy promotion organisations practiced the same black and white thinking as policy-makers and conflated pro-US positions with moral and ideological superiority. As David L. Banks argued in 1986, democracy promotion organisations, such as Freedom House, blurred ideological and moral framings and suggested that their ‘scoring scale is hardly better than a division into “good” and “bad” countries’ (Banks 1986: 659). Other studies, including Bollen (1986:568), Chomsky and Herman (1994: 27-28), Mainwaring,

Brinks, Perez-Linan (2011: 53-54) and Tsygankov and Parker (2015) have also highlighted the Cold War practice of democracy promotion organisations having bias towards pro-US states.

### ***US Democracy Promotion in the Region and Responses to Regional Tensions***

The issue of democracy promotion in the non-Russian post-Soviet states was most problematic to US-Russian relations during Bush's second term, following the Colour Revolutions (Stent 2014: 97-123; Stewart 2009a; Finkel and Brundy 2012). However, even during the early part of the decade US framings of the trajectory for many states in the region were bound within Cold War narratives and US approaches to the region influenced by its Cold War-informed identity as a global leader with a moral right to spread democracy. In 2001 Bush told an audience in Warsaw that, '[t]he bells of victory have rung. The iron curtain is no more. Now we plan to build a house of freedom, whose doors are open to all Europe's peoples' (Bush 2001a). Then Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs and former US Ambassador to Ukraine Steven Pifer told Congress in May 2004 that the United States had had a consistent vision for Ukraine for the past ten years, a democratic country that 'draws closer to Europe and to European and Euro-Atlantic institutions' (Pifer 2004).

This ambition was buttressed by an increase in funding for democracy promotion in states like Ukraine, where the administration disbursed almost \$60 million on the development of civil society and electoral participation (Rieffer and Mercer 2005: 398). Indeed, Way (2008: 61) notes that Ukraine has received significant levels of aid from the United States throughout the post-Cold War era. Stent (2014: 105) suggests that Georgia was one of the world's largest capita per recipients of American democracy assistance in the 1990s and that the George W. Bush administration continued the focus on Georgia, with particular concerns about the 2003 election. Tarnoff (2007: 8) reports that prior to the Colour Revolutions the United States had invested \$138 million in Georgia, \$453million in Ukraine and \$94 million in Kyrgyzstan to promote democratisation. US actors also provided support

to civil society and media development – the latter of which Anable (2006) argues was particularly significant in the Rose Revolution, in terms of reporting on events and public mobilisation.

Cold War assumptions about the region's trajectory were twinned with perceptions of the United States' own Cold War-informed identity as a global leader with a legitimate mandate to promote change, especially in Europe (as detailed in Chapters Two and Three). This was reflected in significant diplomatic efforts to secure free and fair elections. In the case of Ukraine, Senator Lugar delivered a personal note to Kuchma on the eve of the Ukrainian vote. High-level visitors to Ukraine in 2004, including Rumsfeld, Armitage, USAID Ambassador Natsios, George H. W. Bush, Brzezinski and Senator McCain, reinforced the message that the conduct of the elections would have a direct impact on bilateral-relations. The United States funded one of the largest ever international observer efforts to report on the elections and funded political party training, voter awareness and training for officials, costing approximately \$13.8 million (Teft 2004). Indeed, McFaul (2007: 18) suggests that the United States spent \$18 million in election-related assistance to Ukraine in the two year period prior to the 2004 election. The chapter has noted that democracy promotion has rarely trumped wider security and economic interests. As Stent outlines (2014: 264) democracy promotion has not been consistently applied. It is thus interesting that this diplomatic support had the potential to do so, both for relations with Russia but also wider objectives, but was conducted regardless. For instance, Woehrel (2005: 10) notes that Yanukovych had committed 1,600 troops to the war in Iraq whilst Yushchenko had pledged to withdraw those troops if elected.

The US government had declared that it would work with whoever was elected in Ukraine, as long as the election was free and fair (Woehrel 2005: 10). However, distinct support was provided for pro-democracy actors opposed to the governments. As McFaul (2007b: 71-81) describes, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and National Democratic Institute (NDI) worked with opposition leaders to strengthen their capabilities and the organisations' leading figures, such as Albright, spoke favourably of Yushchenko and increased his contact with the Bush administration.

Tsygankov notes (2009a: 103) that a similar visit was arranged for Saakashvili six months prior to the Rose Revolution. Tsygankov (2000b) also suggests that organisations including Freedom House, NDI, the George Soros Foundation and IRI were involved in financing and training opposition to Shevardnaze and other incumbent regimes. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that NDI introduced Saakashvili 'to the methods insurgents in Serbia used to depose dictator Slobodan Milosevic' (Melloan 2003).

Once the uprisings began, some limited democracy assistance was provided – primarily in Georgia and Ukraine although, as Lewis (2008) details, some support was also provided for the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan. Government actors and government-funded organisations, as well as civil society groups active in previous Colour Revolutions, all took actions during the revolutions (Welt 2010). For instance, the US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan reportedly sent Freedom House two generators after power went out which facilitated 200,000 copies to be printed of opposition newspaper MSN, which was a primary source of information for mobilising opposition (Smith 2005: 4). While they made a contribution, the influence of US actors on the Colour Revolutions should not be over-stated. Scholars, as well as citizens that took part in the revolutions, have outlined the importance of the general public in the uprisings (McFaul 2007: 28; Kandelaki 2006; Polese 2011: 440; Mitchell 2009). Perhaps even more relevant in the context of US-Russian relations was the analysis of some actors that sought to reinforce the perception of US leadership and take credit for the uprisings (Stewart 2009b: 805; Bouchet 2015: 6). In July 2004 Lorne Crane, Assistant Secretary in the DRL, suggested that US work with opposition leaders in Georgia 'culminated in the peaceful Revolution of Roses' (Mitchell 2009: 3). IRI Director Stephen B. Nix claimed that his organisation 'contributed to the triumph of democracy in Ukraine' (Nix 2005). A White House document detailing 'President Bush's Accomplishments' listed the democratic uprisings in Georgia, Ukraine, Lebanon and Kyrgyzstan (White House 2005b). A published report funded by USAID suggested that USAID-supported activity 'played a decidedly important role in facilitating Ukraine's turn to democracy' (Clark and Stout 2005: preface).



That some US actors sought credit for the uprisings fuelled Russian concerns, as Carothers (2006), Trenin (2008: 119-120) and Mitchell (2009: 2) note, about the role and intentions of US democracy promotion or, at the very least, provided a degree of perceived legitimacy for further domestic centralisation (Stent 2014: 116; Sakwa 2014: 178). The eagerness of the new governments to praise US contributions is also likely to have increased Russian suspicions of US involvement, as well as convince US policy-makers of their trajectory because of the practice of conflating pro-US with democratic. Saakashvili asserted that ‘Americans helped us most by channelling support to free Georgian media [...] that was more powerful than 5,000 marines’ (Ignatius 2005: 21). On another occasion he publicly suggested that during the uprising, ‘no country stood closer to Georgia than the US’ (BBC 2005). That regime change, particularly in the light of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, became closely associated with Bush’s democracy promotion strategies further encouraged Russian scepticism of the US role in the Colour Revolutions, with the Kremlin perceiving threat to the Russian system (Stent 2014: 101).

That the United States supported the uprisings is not surprising in the context of the Freedom Agenda. However, assumptions about the region’s trajectory influenced simplistic analysis of the new regimes that was partly based on Cold War assumptions about the universality of democracy. McFaul (July 2005: 6) notes that very few analysts saw the breakthroughs coming. Indeed, Tarnoff suggests that they were ‘corrupt, economically stagnant and authoritarian’ up until the Colour Revolutions (Tarnoff 2007: 8). Despite this, the Colour Revolutions were almost treated as *fait accompli*. Despite the many challenges that the new administrations in Georgia and Ukraine faced, the new governments were treated with limited objectivity and US actors often assumed that the new leaders were committed democrats embracing universal values and that the states were fulfilling their post-Cold War trajectory of becoming modern democracies. George W. Bush, in 2005, praised the Georgian people for completing ‘the task you [they] began in 1989’ and, explicitly linking the uprising to efforts to gain independence from the Soviet Union, told the Georgian crowd that Georgia had claimed its sovereignty in 1991 but that

with the Rose Revolution it had completed the task and become ‘a beacon of liberty in the region’ (Bush 2005b). John McCain and Hillary Clinton suggested that Yushchenko and Saakashvili should be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for ‘leading freedom movements’ and winning ‘popular support for the universal values of democracy, individual liberty, and civil rights’ (Asatiani 2007). Then Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Ambassador Daniel Fried, despite recognising issues such as censorship of the media, was firm that, ‘President Yushchenko and his government are [were] forging a genuine democracy’ (Fried 2005). In 2007 Senator Lugar, Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, stated that the ‘Rose Revolution ushered in a new era of leadership and advanced democratic institutions, human rights, and free-market principles’ (Lugar 2007). A review part-funded by USAID asserted that the election of Yushchenko was confirmation that, ‘Ukraine was on the path to democracy and the modern world’ (Clark and Stout 2005: 17). Stent noted that in 2005 it seemed to US officials that Ukraine was on course towards ‘freedom and democracy’ and that officials such as Rumsfeld argued that the uprisings were proof of the practical and moral value of the US freedom agenda (Stent 2014: 115&122). Pifer (2014) recalls that there was great hope within US government about the trajectory for those states following the uprisings and concedes that officials underestimated the challenges of transition.

Confidence in the democratic credentials of the new administrations was reflected in funding levels and the nature of democracy assistance following the revolutions. Stewart (2000b: 810) details that there was a boost in funding overall and for democracy promotion in Georgia and Ukraine. In 2005 Georgia was allocated \$86 million from FSA accounts in comparison to Russia’s \$85 million while Ukraine received \$78.6 million as well as an additional emergency \$60 million (Tarnoff 2007: 6). Elizabeth A. Jones reported to Congress that in Georgia the administration had sent a senior delegation immediately following the change in government to provide support while also accelerating spending and redirecting it from other programmes to stabilise the new government and to launch its reforms (Jones 2004a). Unlike in Russia where the reverse was true, funding shifted away from civil society and towards state actors (Muskhelishvili and Jorjoliani 2009). Because the new leaders were saying the ‘right things’ there was an expectation that the new

administrations would pursue policies of democratisation - such as Saakashvili stating that he 'was raised on American democracy' (Melloan 2003). As Stewart (2009b: 815-816) notes, this was taken for granted and was reinforced by the expectations of democracy emerging naturally once barriers are removed – a key post-Cold War understanding.

Such perceptions and approaches neglected the fact that the new administrations were struggling with transition and US framings seemed partly guided by historical narratives. Indeed, as Bosin (2012: 4) notes, by 2009 Freedom House democracy scores for Georgia and Kyrgyzstan had dropped to prerevolutionary levels. By oversimplifying the situation and failing to hold the governments to account, US actors undermined their own legitimacy in the eyes of other states, including Russia, as genuine democracy promoters. Mendelson suggested in 2002 that, 'in their rush to see Russia become a democracy, policy-makers in foreign governments and IOs have not paid sufficient attention to the issue of superficiality' (Mendelson 2002b: 47) and the same was true in relation to the Colour Revolution states (Stewart 2009a: 653-654). A Soviet-era history of paternalistic state-society relations meant that even after the uprisings the governments failed to genuinely engage with civil society as well as a failure to replace existing political and economic elites (Stewart 2009b: 808), particularly in Ukraine where both Yushchenko and Tymoshenko had already been high-ranking government officials. While Saakashvili won the Georgian election resoundingly, he reportedly considered banning parties that opposed his pro-Western stance (RFE/RL 2005). Kupchan (February 2006) notes that US support was unwavering despite problems, including the increased centralisation of power in Georgia and corruption, and in 2006 were still presenting Saakashvili as a model democrat (Gershman 2002). As Mitchell (2006: 676) has noted, US concerns were made privately rather than publicly, in contrast to the shaming towards Russia outlined above.

This un-nuanced support for geopolitically important states on Russia's borders affected US-Russian relations by reinforcing the perception of Russian actors that US democracy promotion was a geopolitical tool to increase US influence. As

outlined, this was already a Russian narrative based on the nature of US democracy promotion towards Russia. Russian policy-makers made accusations of double standards over issues such as election monitoring, failing to respect sovereignty and using the language of democracy to mask a desire for greater influence in the region (McFaul 2001; Kessler 2004; Bowker 2008: 163). A particularly striking case of optimism for democratic trends undermining US-Russian relations was US support for NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia. While this was not traditional democracy promotion, actions were framed as encouraging democracy. Despite evidence that both states were struggling with transition this nuance was limited in US analysis. Bush argued that membership 'would send a signal to their citizens that if they continue on the path to democracy and reform they will be welcomed into the institutions of Europe' and that 'NATO membership must remain open to all of Europe's democracies' (Bush 2008). Other leading figures also framed membership for Georgia and Ukraine in terms of expanding freedom. Richard Lugar instigated a bill in the Senate in favour of NATO membership for the two states based on the premise that it would, 'enable Europe, the United States, and NATO to expand the zone of freedom and security' (Tsygankov 2009b). Rumsfeld urged NATO enlargement and defined Georgia and Ukraine as 'democratic, politically mature, [and] relatively stable' whilst accusing Russia of 'tired rhetoric of the Cold War' (Rumsfeld 2008: 13). Support for a Membership Action Plan continued at the April 2008 NATO Summit despite Russian officials warning that Ukraine and Georgian membership would require Moscow to revise its policy (Tsygankov 2009b), neither state being close to meeting the normal standards for NATO membership (Matlock 2010: 308) and other states, such as France and Germany, suggesting that the two states were not yet stable enough to enter NATO and that it would unnecessarily antagonise Russia (Sakwa 2014: 115&219).

Assumptions about democracy and the roles of respective parties further undermined US-Russian relations because of the US common practice of viewing Russian actions and policies through an ideological lens. This is not to deny that there were genuine concerns about Russian policies and political system. For instance, analysts have demonstrated that the Russian government did try to influence the outcome of the elections and take actions against democracy promotion in the region (Aslund

2007: 266; Stent 2014: 112-113; Polese 2011: 10&17-18; McFaul 2007: 49&69; Bouchet 2015: 1). However, in framing Russia's role in regional tensions as primarily ideological, US analysis of Russia's response to the Colour Revolutions and Russo-Georgian War significantly undermined relations. While the administration noted that the 'United States recognizes that Russia has legitimate interests in Eurasia based on geography, economics and history' there was nevertheless a potentially competitive element to foreign policy and denial of, or disinterest in, Russian interests (Jones 2004b). Indeed, Cheney advocated a tough policy towards Russia, supporting Moscow's neighbours and articulating suspicion of Russian intentions (Stent 2014: 101).

Internal debate and policy-decisions reflected the increased reliance on Cold War framings and practices. Guidance provided to Congress highlighted the prevalence of the post-communist transition paradigm and identification of US-Russian relations in competitive, ideological terms. It noted that for many observers, the elections in Ukraine offered the opportunity for Ukraine to either move towards 'real democracy' and integrate with Euro-Atlantic institutions or it could move towards a 'Russian sphere of influence with "managed democracy"' (Woehrel 2005). Similarly, differences between the way in which Russia and new governments were viewed appeared to influence tangible and symbolic policy. Despite failing to lift the Jackson-Vanik amendment for Russia, it was repealed for Ukraine by March 2006. Public analysis by democracy promotion organisations and leading commentators of Russia's role and motivations in the Colour Revolutions were even clearer in their comparisons to the Cold War. Former Freedom House Board Member Brzezinski warned about the danger of Soviet restoration, calling Putin a new Mussolini with nostalgia for reviving an empire (Brzezinski 2004). Adrian Karatnycky of Freedom House spoke of a favourable 'seismic shift westwards in the geo-politics of the region' (Steel 2005: 33). Former FH Board Member Anne Applebaum suggested that a 'new iron curtain' was descending across Europe and dividing the continent because of Russia's behaviour (Applebaum 2004: 21).

Historically informed narratives of Russian aggression were reinforced across this period by the public positions of CEE groups with access to policy-makers. CEE lobbies met with President George W. Bush and senior White officials in October 2007 to discuss issues critical to the region, including NATO expansion (Polish American Congress 2007). Frank Koszoru, co-president of The American Hungarian Federation, was invited to speak about Russia's influence on its former satellite states at a Hudson Institute panel in 2007. Koszoru highlighted Russian intimidation and called for greater US engagement in the region to help strengthen democratic institutions and to 'resist Russia's alarming and naked attempts to expand its influence in the region'. (Koszoru 2007). The CEEC lobbied Senators not to 'pander to Russian nostalgia for imperialism' (CEEC 2008). McCain's campaign team, in reaching out to Polish activists, praised Poland's 'support for Georgia in the face of Russian aggression' (Poland.us 2008).

As during the Cold War, the ideological language employed moral framings to policy in the post-Soviet space - particularly in defending democracies from an imperial Russian threat. As Foglesong (2007: 225) describes, US treatment of the Orange Revolution as a morality play reflected the long-standing practice of framing complex political developments in the post-Soviet space as in terms of good and evil. This served to undermine US-Russian relations as Russian actors came to view the United States of practicing double standards and increasingly pushed back against US agendas. Fearing that Western actors could encourage similar uprisings in Russia Putin employed a range of actions designed to strengthen the state that were counter-productive to democracy including, restrictive new regulations on NGOs, the introduction of the Nashi youth movement, electoral legislation reforms designed to weaken the opposition and suspending the activities of over ninety foreign NGOs, including IRI and Human Rights Watch (Saara 2009; Finkel and Brundy 2012; Finn 2006; Carothers 2006; Ambrosio 2007; Charap 2010b: 287; Duncan 2013; Bouchet 2015). Russian officials at least partly attributed the Colour Revolutions to Western governmental NGOs and outside interference (Fawn 2009: 1788). Putin is reported to consider Bush to have made false promises and to believe that the United States was heavily involved in the Colour Revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine and in the Georgian war itself (Charap 2010b: 287; Bowker 2013: 203-204; Larson and

Shevchenko 2010: 91). Even if the fears were exaggerated, US democracy promotion provided apparent legitimisation for the further centralisation of power in Russia and restrictions on civil society. Indeed, they were reflected in official policy, with the Russian Foreign Ministry asserting in 2008 that there was a global competition taking place:

On a civilizational level, whereby various values and models of development based on the universal principles of democracy and market economy start to clash and compete against each other (Russian Foreign Ministry 2008).

Similarly, optimistic assessments of democratic trajectory contributed to regional tensions being excessively simplified and framed using Cold War analogies. This meant that responses were based on ideological interpretations and reflexively apportioned the majority of blame to Russia (Tsygankov 2009b; Bowker 2011). During a Congressional hearing to address US-Russian relations in the aftermath of the Russo-Georgian war Fried likened Russia's actions to the Soviets by explicitly comparing them to, '1979 and Afghanistan, 1968 and Czechoslovakia, 1956 and Hungary' and suggesting that the statements of some Russian leaders were, 'an echo of the Brezhnev Doctrine's right of intervention' (HR110-221 2008: 22). Republican Congressman Ted Poe, member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, declared that when he saw Russia, he saw 'a big bear growling with "KGB" still written across its chest in the name of Putin' (HR110-221 2008: 43). McCain argued that 'Russia used violence against Georgia to send a signal to any country that chooses to associate with the West' (Barnes 2008). Condoleezza Rice compared Russia's actions to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia (Tsygankov 2009b). Such was the extent of Cold War comparison that, during the second presidential campaign debate, Obama was asked, in reference to Ronald Reagan's famous phrase, if Russia, under Putin, was an 'evil empire' (Charap 2010b: 286). Such analysis ignored the fact that Georgia was 'floundering democratically long before the August 2008 war with Russia' (Stewart 2009a: 653) and that the origins of the

conflict were complex, with Georgia playing an important role (Allison 2008: 1147-1148; Sakwa 2014: 163; Tsygankov 2009b; Matlock 2010: 248-251).

In conclusion, three Cold War understandings had a particular influence on US democracy promotion in non-Russian parts of the post-Soviet space: interpretations of democracy's universality, the assumption that parts of the non-Russian post-Soviet space would move towards Europe and the idea that the United States had a unique and legitimate leadership role in the region. These understandings shaped the United States' democracy promotion approach in the region; its framings of that promotion, and the states' post-communist trajectory; and a tendency to cast complex regional tensions into overly-simplified moral and ideological framings. While US support for the region likely did play a role in the success of the uprisings in Georgia and Ukraine, it also significantly undermined US-Russian relations by reinforcing a dynamic of moral and ideological competition, fuelling Russian perceptions of US double standards and supporting policies, such as proposed NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia, that enhanced Russian perceptions of insecurity.

## **Conclusion**

Although a range of factors influenced the US approach to democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009, such as the GWOT and unique political events in the region that provided democratic 'hooks', ideational legacies also played a role in shaping the US approach. Expectations for the political trajectory of some of the non-Russian states towards Western-style democracy and a return to Europe (alongside the US role supporting this), conflicting expectations for Russia's future, that were torn between expectations that it would move towards the West and an entrenched mistrust of Russia that understood it as inherently imperialistic and autocratic, and the reflexive position of viewing tensions in the region as inherently ideological contributed to an inconsistent democracy approach in the region that undermined US-Russian relations. This was buttressed by a reliance on a Cold War-era formed democracy promotion infrastructure that



continued to use Cold War tools towards the region despite the changed context and that demonstrated institutionalised mistrust of Russia.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **The New START Treaty**

#### **Introduction**

NST offers the opportunity to examine how influential Cold War legacies remained over time, as domestic and international contexts changed. When Barack Obama, a policy-maker with professional and generational distance from the Cold War, signed the ratification of NST in February 2011 almost twenty years had passed since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Despite this, the negotiation and ratification of NST in the United States demonstrated the continued influence of Cold War ideational legacies on the ways that foreign policy elites framed and managed relations with Russia. This was specifically so in three ways: the persistence in placing arms control as the cornerstone of US-Russian relations, and the concepts and models that underpinned arms control; the retained understanding of some actors that US-Russian relations remained based on competition and mistrust; and a strong retained commitment to missile defence that, for some actors, was necessary to protect European allies from potential Russian aggression.

NST was, as will be outlined, seemingly in both states' interest. This, along with the wider reset, set a positive tone to negotiations. Another encouraging factor was that bilateral arms control with the Soviet Union and Russia had traditionally enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress. The United States and Soviet Union had signed and ratified several agreements, including SALT 1, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the INF Treaty and START (entered into force in 1992) (Arms Control Association 2011; Schenck and Youmans 2012; Woolf, Kerr and Nikitin 2015: 1-10). Bipartisan Congressional support continued in the post-Cold War era, with the Senate approving START II (although this did not take effect because of a failure to ratify the 1997 protocol) by 87-4 and the Moscow Treaty (SORT) by 95-0 (Macon 2010; Bohlen 2007). That the original START treaty had expired in December 2009 provided a clear incentive to conclude a new agreement. At the presidential level the language was of partnership and friendship and, of all the post-Cold War issues, arms control appeared to be one of the most manageable issues in US-Russian

relations. Despite this, the passage of NST within the United States was difficult and controversial. While the treaty did ultimately pass the Senate, it required considerable lobbying from the Executive Office and served to dampen some of the initial optimism of the reset. There were several factors that influenced NST's negotiation and ratification, with partisanship an important issue. One of these factors was the influence of Cold War ideational legacies, particularly so regarding Republican policy-makers, treaty negotiators and conservative analytical elites.

The chapter provides details of the treaty and wider contextual factors before outlining the ideational legacies, which had both positive and negative influences on US-Russian relations. The first ideational legacy was the on-going acceptance of, and confidence in, Cold War era concepts of arms control to structure NST. The continued use of Cold War era arms control concepts and structures provided a clear roadmap for negotiating the treaty. Whilst agreeing NST was crucial to the reset, the use of Cold War concepts reinforced adversarial dynamics and continued to place arms control at the centre of bilateral relations, despite the changed geopolitical context. The second ideational legacy was a strong retained strain of thinking within foreign-policy circles that understood US-Russian relations as being based on zero-sum competition. This was underpinned by a disproportionate mistrust of Russia that was influenced by historically informed assumptions and habits. The final ideational legacy was a strong commitment to missile defence that, for some actors, was crucial for protecting Eastern and Central Europe from potential Russian aggression.

The chapter concludes by suggesting that, despite two decades passing since the collapse of the Soviet Union, NST did not represent a paradigm shift in US thinking and attitudes towards Russia. Rather, the influence of Cold War ideational legacies continued to play an important role in shaping US foreign policy towards Russia and in the ways that Russia was debated within the US foreign policy elite. These legacies had positive impacts in facilitating the successful negotiation of the treaty but also limited the scope for long-term changes in US-Russian relations and undermined the tone of the reset. As such, NST was not, as Obama asserted, an important step in 'leaving the Cold War behind' (Obama and Medvedev 2010).

Unlike the previous case study, which demonstrated the importance of US actor perceptions of US identity and role in the managing and framing of US-Russian relations, this case highlighted the ongoing importance of Cold-War conceptions of Russia's identity, with entrenched ideas of Russia as a deceitful state that could not be trusted and that posed a threat to US security and interests. These perceptions, reinforced by Cold War analogies, historical comparison and domestic groups, combined with historical narratives concerning the future of Europe and its relationship with the United States to significantly influence NST ratification debates and the scope of what the administration could negotiate with Russia. Also central to this case was the influence of institutionalised expertise and personal experience, with officials seemingly influenced by the logic of habit in their commitment to Cold War era concepts of arms control.

### **NST Details and Ratification**

NST (2010) outlines arms reductions, verification measures and information exchanges between the US and Russian strategic nuclear systems. Both states agreed to reduce their arsenals to 1550 deployed nuclear warheads, 700 deployed strategic delivery vehicles (SDV), and 800 launchers. The treaty permits for 18 on-site inspections per year, data exchanges on weapons and facilities, assigning unique identifiers to each SDV and up to five exchanges of telemetric information each year. Compared to the original START, NST allows for more flexibility in force structuring, and the verification regime is less costly and invasive. While NST is more flexible and simpler than its predecessor, it remains based on the original START model, which expired in December 2009. As will be outlined, the underlying concepts of nuclear security and arms control that guided negotiations remained primarily those from the Cold War period. Indeed, the treaty was presented by the Executive Office as the obvious next step in decades of bilateral strategic arms control (Obama 2010d).

After eight rounds of negotiations over the course of seven months NST was signed on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2010, submitted for Congressional review in May 2010 and ratified by the Senate on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2010 by a 71-26 vote. The seven months required to debate NST was the longest period ever for an arms control treaty. It was subject to nearly twenty Senate hearings, heard from over thirty experts and received close to 1,000 questions. Despite this the treaty's ratification was still uncertain just a few days before the vote, with Lugar the only Republican openly backing NST until close to the deadline.

## **Context**

This section outlines the relevant domestic and international context which influenced the opportunities that the administration had to engage Russia on NST as well as the nature of the ratification debates. Although significant differences of opinion and perceptions between US and Russian actors over important international issues, including US missile defence in Europe, policy in Afghanistan, the security of Eurasia, the future of Central Asia and Iran's status (Trenin 2009; Blank 2010; Burwel and Svante 2012) remained a feature of relations, NST was negotiated against an improved backdrop in bilateral relations. As outlined in the thesis Introduction, US-Russian relations during the early period of the first Obama administration were marked by the reset and, as such, the negotiation and ratification of NST took place within the context of improved US-Russian relations. The administration recognised relations with Russia as an 'important bilateral relationship' (White House 2010c) and, as Legvold (2010: 24) notes, in his first few months Obama gave as much attention to Russia as Iraq and Afghanistan. Celeste A. Wallander, then US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia, outlined the administration's recognition of Russia's importance, which underpinned the US desire to improve relations. In October 2009 she explained that:

U.S.-Russian relations are important for American national and security interests across the globe in a wide variety of issues [...] whether that's Iraq, Afghanistan, non-proliferation, global

economic stability, Russia is a potential partner and a country that the United States cannot and should not ignore (Cohen, Simes and Wallander: 2009).

During a visit to Moscow in 2011 Biden, while accepting that there would be disagreements and divergences of interest, outlined that ‘we wanted to literally reset this relationship, reset it in a way that reflected our mutual interests, so that our countries could move forward together’ (Biden 2011). As the thesis Introduction outlined, this achieved some tangible successes, including the creation of the Presidential Bilateral Commission and Russia cancelling the planned sale of its S-300 air defence missile system to Iran (Arbatov 2011: 17).

Within this broad context several factors, domestic and international, supported the aims of the administration whilst others were potential barriers to the safe passage of NST. One important factor that provided an opportunity to improve relations and negotiate NST was that Obama was a newly elected president. As the thesis Introduction outlined, the high-points in the cyclical nature of post-Cold War US-Russian relations have generally coincided with a US president’s first term. An improvement in relations may not have been possible under an existing administration burdened with previous bilateral tensions. While having a new president was thus potentially a facilitating factor in improving bilateral relations, the outlook and history of the incoming president was also important. Jervis (2013: 162) argues that had McCain won the 2008 presidential race he would have found it harder to have left a large residential force in Iraq. It similarly holds that had McCain been elected then it is possible that US-Russian relations would not have taken such an upturn. McCain’s career was forged during the Cold War and his negative sentiments towards Russia are on record (for example, McCain November / December 2007: 27). Trenin suggests that McCain’s calls to remove Russia from the G8 resonated in the Kremlin, with many seeing him as a latter-day Reagan in his first term, ‘combining harsh rhetoric with a major arms build up’ (Trenin 2008b: 112). Indeed, following the deterioration in bilateral relations under the George W. Bush administration, a reset may have proved more difficult with any Republican

president. Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's ambassador to NATO, reportedly warned that the US-Russian relationship could collapse if the Republicans came back into office (Vadim 2011). Indeed, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov suggested in early 2010 that the 'many year slump' in US-Russian relations was replaced 'by dynamic and constructive dialogue after the Obama administration took over' (Ryabkov 2010: 209).

As well as having less Cold War baggage, Obama's approach to foreign policy, as Milne (2010) analysed, suggested a greater pragmatism during the early period of his presidency, with an increased focus on mutual interests and multilateralism. This was apparent early in his first term, where Obama not only sought to improve relations with Russia, but spoke about re-engagement with Iran (Obama 2009a) and softened rhetoric around US exceptionalism (Obama 2009b). Improved relations, of course, require willingness on both sides. Although the focus of this thesis is the United States, it is worth noting that Dimitry Medvedev had been elected as Russian president six months prior to Obama's election. Tsyppkin and Loukianova suggest that the, 'decision-making machinery of the Russian government appears to be highly dependent on the policy preferences and their relationships with the heads of government' (Tsyppkin and Loukianova 2009: 114). Medvedev was a generation younger than his predecessor and, like Obama, had fewer personal and professional connections to the Cold War era so was less constrained by previous tensions. Whilst Putin retained an influence on decision making in his role as Prime Minister (Golosov 2011; Sakwa 2011: 301-212), summit meetings – key to US-Russian relations – were easier with Medvedev for this reason. Indeed, Stent (2014: 271) notes that their good working relationship had helped the reset to work well.

A second contextual factor supportive of securing NST was that the signing of NST in April 2010 coincided with numerous other initiatives in American and international nuclear policy. These included the release of the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), the first Nuclear Security Summit and the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference (Issacs 2010; Dhanapala 2010). The NPR outlined an evolving US nuclear policy to reflect geopolitical changes.

Although the NPR reinforced the importance of nuclear deterrence and the strategic and political importance of nuclear weapons, it did include messages that reflected a shift in US attitudes towards nuclear weapons and Russia. The NPR stated the ambition to reduce ‘the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national strategy’ and recognised the need to develop a more progressive relationship with Russia (US Department of Defense 2010c: iv). The report stated that:

[T]he nature of the U.S.-Russia relationship has changed fundamentally since the days of the Cold War. While policy differences continue to arise between the two countries [...] Russia and the United States are no longer adversaries (US Department of Defense 2010c: iv).

Following the release of the NPR, both the Nuclear Security Summit and the NPT Review Conference resulted in statements in support of strengthening non-proliferation and nuclear security whilst the United States also reached several bilateral agreements to secure enriched uranium and separated plutonium, including with Ukraine (White House 2010a). The increased focus on nuclear security stemmed largely from Obama’s ambition to implement a new policy direction for nuclear weapons. In Prague on 5 April 2009, Obama reiterated his campaign goal of eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide and repeatedly emphasised the dangers of holding onto Cold War legacies. Obama stated that:

The existence of thousands of nuclear weapons is the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War [...] I state clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. (Obama 2009c).

The administration made frequent high profile statements about the danger that nuclear weapons represented to the United States, describing them as ‘the most



troubling threats of our time' (Obama 2010a) and, alongside terrorism, 'the two greatest dangers we face today' (Clinton 2010a). As such NST was negotiated and ratified within the context of an increasing focus on arms control and the important role Russia could play was recognised. With the two largest nuclear stockpiles in the world (Federation of American Scientists 2010), US actors recognised that efforts to enhance nuclear security required Russian cooperation. The NPR stated that Russia 'is increasingly a partner in confronting proliferation' (US Department of Defense 2010c: iv). Obama stated that given the nuclear legacy of the Cold War, 'it is critical for us to show significant leadership' and referred to Medvedev as a partner (Medvedev and Obama 2010). During a NATO Summit in November 2010 Obama stressed that failing to ratify NST would put at risk 'our partnership with Russia on behalf of global security' (Obama 2010c). The recognition of the importance of Russian cooperation to enhancing nuclear security was widely shared by a large proportion of analytical elites, particularly centrist and liberal-leaning (for example see, Pifer 2010a; Rojansky 2010; Acton and Gearson 2011).

A third factor conducive to the successful negotiation of NST was Russian defence capacities. Reports suggest that Russia was already below some of the treaty limits and was retiring older systems faster than it was adding new weapons (Reif 2011; US Department of State 2011; Arbatov 2011: 1). Former State Duma member Alexi Arbatov predicted that by 2020 Russia could have as few as 350-400 deployed delivery vehicles (Arbatov March 2011: 14). As such, NST was one area where it appeared to be in Russia's favour to cooperate with US aims. This was something that the Executive Office recognised, particularly given Russia's economic difficulties. Biden reportedly suggested that Russia was more likely to work with the West on arms reductions as it could not afford to maintain the current arsenal (Spiegel 2009). This problem was exacerbated by the 2008 financial crisis, which, Trenin (2009a: 67-68) reports, had a greater impact on Russia than any other major state. Indeed, critics of NST argued that the treaty disproportionately favoured Russia, as Russia was likely to reduce its nuclear forces regardless of the treaty (Payne 2011).

Despite these favourable factors, there were several issues that were potential barriers to NST's safe passage. The first of these was that, despite the administration's ambitions to improve US-Russian relations, there was influential domestic opposition to the reset across parts of the foreign policy community. As Deyermond (2013) demonstrates, much of this opposition was from Republicans although many right-leaning think-tanks and CEE ethnic lobbies were also opposed to the reset. As will be outlined below, this opposition was often expressed with reference to the Cold War and using Cold War terminology and analogies. Actors frequently focused on ideology and perceived Russian imperial and autocratic instincts, with regional tensions often simplified into the familiar frame of an aggressive Russia oppressing democratic neighbours. For example, then ranking Republican member of the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (2009a) argued in 2009 that Russia had become increasingly authoritarian at home and aggressive abroad and called for Russia's membership of the G8 to be terminated. Ros-Lehtinen frequently made anti-reset arguments across this period (Ros-Lehtinen 2009b, 2010b). In 2010 John McCain (2010) urged the resumption of defensive arms sales to Georgia and increasing pressure for human rights and legal reforms in Russia.

Many analytical elites, particularly right-leaning and conservative elites, mirrored these narratives. For example, in 2010 Kim R. Holmes (2010), then Vice-President for Foreign and Defense Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, argued that the reset needlessly emboldened Russia to become more assertive by giving status to a country that was neither a friend nor strategic partner. In another analysis Holmes accused the Russian government of being 'steeped in Cold War thinking' and criticised 'Russia's resurrection of ideological warfare' (Holmes 2010a). References to the Cold War were common. Even analysis in support of (or at least not against) the reset was often framed in Cold War terms. Mark Medish, formerly a senior adviser at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, suggested that, 'in a sense, it's like a mini-détente after a mini-cold war' (in, Baker 2009a).

A second factor that added to the challenges of ratification was domestic opposition to Obama's stated objective of beginning a process of eliminating nuclear weapons. This narrative was tied to NST which, for advocates of nuclear deterrence, contributed to an increased intensity of opposition. Republican Jeff Sessions, in a hearing before the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces argued that 'the US Senate did not consent to a goal of disarmament. This was not part of the New START Treaty' (US Congressional Record: Senate Hrg. 111-228, 2011). As such NST was, as will be outlined, opposed on its own terms but also within wider opposition to the aim of eliminating nuclear weapons.

As well as the differences in position on both nuclear security and the relationship with Russia, ratification was also threatened by a high level of partisanship. The tone and process of ratification debates were negatively influenced by domestic political factors. Trubowitz (2011) has outlined the prevalence of partisanship in the post-Cold War era and this was especially acute during the period of NST ratification, with pre-existing partisan acrimonies, including over healthcare, having a divisive influence on NST and reset debates (Ferraro 2010; Bergstrom 2014; Deyermund 2012: 67). Mid-term elections in November 2010 resulted in a lame-duck Congress, with numerous Congressional seats set for Republican takeover. This made for a particularly partisan Congressional climate and meant that the White House was keen to push ratification through before Christmas, before the balance of power shifted, whilst many Republicans seemed eager to delay the vote until after January. This partisanship during NST ratification debates and the surrounding commentary made clear that the foreign-policy community was in no way united in an effort to improve relations with Russia. The White House, in the days leading up to the vote, strongly criticised Senators for 'putting political stunts ahead of our national security' (White House 2010d); Senator John Kerry argued 'there is no room in this debate for domestic politics' (Kerry 2010b) and Obama stated that 'some things are bigger than politics' (Obama 2010d).

Overall, although NST was negotiated and ratified within the context of improving US-Russian relations, there were wider factors that influenced the process. Some of

these factors made securing NST more likely, such as a renewed focus on nuclear security and the need for spending cuts within Russia. Others, however, particularly an increased domestic partisanship, not only challenged the success of NST, but also hinted at future difficulties in the US-Russian relationship. It was within this broad context that NST was negotiated and ratified. The chapter will now outline the influence of three Cold War ideational legacies on the negotiation and ratification of NST within this wider context.

## **Ideational Legacy 1: Cold War Era Arms Control Concepts Remain Relevant**

### ***Introduction***

The first ideational legacy was the on-going acceptance of, and confidence in, Cold War-forged concepts of arms control and treaty models with Russia. As Hall, Capello and Lambert (1998: 1) have outlined, in the post-Cold War era many scholars and policy-makers have debated the need to reconceptualise the role of nuclear weapons in US strategy and posture. Some, such as Butler (1996) and Nunn and Blair (1997), have argued that US and Russian nuclear postures and concepts need to be drastically updated to reflect the new context. Nina Tannenwald argued in 2001 that, even though the security climate had changed dramatically in the post-Cold War years, the United States remained:

Mired in Cold War paradigms of threat and deterrence. The Cold War reigns, not only in the astronomical military budget but in the categories and concepts we use to think about arms control and security (Tannenwald 2001: 51-52).

Analysts such as Bohlen suggested that after 9/11 ‘strategic arms control died’ and that arms control was ‘unlikely ever again be so central a preoccupation of US foreign policy’ (Bohlen 2003: 8). NST made clear that this was not the case. As Blank suggests, a consistent feature of US-Russian relations is that ‘both sides’

nuclear forces remain frozen in a posture of mutual deterrence that implies a prior adversarial relationship' (Blank 2009). The ongoing commitment to Cold War-forged arms control concepts was evident in treaty details and the connections were explicitly made by a range of key actors in debates about NST. Proponents of NST highlighted similarities to START as a treaty strength whilst critics often based their opposition on differences between START and NST. While commitment to deterrence and Cold War concepts were, of course, also influenced by Russia and by US considerations of Russia's reliance on deterrence (Sokov 2007; Arabatov 2011; Sokov 2009), the treaty negotiations and ratification debates also highlighted a strong US attachment to the original START model, and subsequent concepts of bilateral strategic parity, nuclear deterrence, detailed verification and the link between offensive and defensive strategic capabilities.<sup>3</sup> Commitment to Cold War era arms control concepts was displayed by the majority of actors. These included NST negotiators, many policy-makers and the majority, although certainly not all, of analytical elites.

This legacy had some positive effects as it provided a manageable way to engage with Russia and a framework for a speedy negotiation. One senior State Department negotiator (2014) suggested that using the START model was key to getting NST negotiated quickly and that it was recognised that agreeing the treaty was crucial to kick-starting relations on other issues. Similarly, arms control can be a positive mechanism for improving trust (see for example, Chayes and Chayes 1995). Indeed, US negotiators described developing a better understanding of the Russian perspective and building positive relationships with their counterparts (interviews with NST negotiators, April 2014). However, while bilateral arms control treaties remained relevant in the post-Cold War era for the material reasons outlined above, the concepts forged during the Cold War and approaches employed within that bilateral approach failed to sufficiently reflect the fundamentally different geopolitical context and structurally reinforced adversarial dynamics. In large part they reflected Cold War assumptions and practices, influenced by the logic of habit and institutionalised expertise. Arms control during the Cold War was designed to

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<sup>3</sup> The importance of this final concept was such that it will be treated as an independent legacy later in this chapter.

stabilise relations and avoid nuclear war between enemies. As former Secretary of State James Baker noted, negotiations over the original START Treaty took place during some of the most difficult years of the Cold War and that, ‘many feared that the Cold War would turn hot. And START was about stopping that race’ (Senate Executive Report 111-6 2010: 2). By 2009 the idea of nuclear war with Russia was unimaginable. Despite this, NST remained similar to Cold War treaties, built on concepts that implied, and structured, an adversarial relationship.

### ***Cold War Influences***

Three Cold War influences were particularly relevant for this legacy. The first, addressed in Chapter Two, was that US experiences of nuclear arms control began during the Cold War with the Soviet Union, with the purpose of preventing deliberate or accidental nuclear conflict. As outlined, successive Cold War US presidents recognised the need to address issues of nuclear security in partnership with the Soviet Union, despite the over-arching understanding of the Soviet Union as a threat and of negotiations being competitive and underpinned by mistrust. As Bohlen notes, mutual suspicion was a ‘familiar pattern in the history of arms control’ during the Cold War (Bohlen 2007: 8). Bilateral arms control became a central feature of US-Soviet relations irrespective of Cold War competition and mistrust. This remained the case at the end of the Cold War with US foreign policy elites identifying nuclear risks as one of the primary risks on the post-Cold War era. This experience of Cold War arms control approaches is especially relevant as many NST negotiators had been involved in negotiating and verifying previous agreements with the Soviet Union and Russia (Woolf 2011: 2).

The second Cold War influence was the concept of nuclear strategic parity (or ‘essential equivalence’, Nitze 1976: 217), which was an important feature of NST treaty details and ratification debate. Strategic parity emerged as a concept intended to prevent war between the United States and the USSR, based on deterrence and Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and the avoidance of a more complex, costly and potentially unstable arms race. (Nitze 1976; Schilling 1981; Yost 2011) It was

designed to prevent nuclear war between adversaries that could not otherwise be relied upon to remain peaceful (and partly influenced through contextual factors such as budget and domestic considerations). As Harvey (2003:321) notes, the purpose of treaties built on MAD were designed for one purpose: 'to stabilize the longest nuclear rivalry in history to prevent a nuclear exchange between the United States and Russia'. Many scholars during the Cold War, such as Mandelbaum (1981) and Gaddis (1986), argued that nuclear deterrence achieved this aim. Parity and stability were challenged by Ronald Reagan's ambitions for enhanced missile defence and the seemingly contradictory discourses about a winnable nuclear war as well as the abolition of nuclear weapons (Mehan, Nathanson and Skelly 1990) but, he too, in practice, recognised the importance of strategic parity, at least in the shorter-term, as evidenced by his commitment to formal arms limitations treaties with the Soviet Union. The INF Treaty, signed in December 1987, stated on the opening page that it was, 'guided by the objective of strengthening strategic stability' (*INF Treaty* 1987) whilst START also centred on setting clear ceilings for both states.

One final Cold War influence, which stemmed from the over-arching Cold War understanding of the USSR as being secretive and untrustworthy and the relationship based on competition, was the firmly entrenched view that it was important to verify Soviet compliance of arms control treaties and to monitor and to gain as much insight into their nuclear arsenal as possible. This was because US elites did not trust Soviet leaders, reflected in widely-held concerns about Soviet treaty violation and expectations of cheating. As such, Cold War treaties had extensive verification mechanisms at their core. START (2010) had an intrusive verification regime, including 28 annual on-site inspections (12 different types) with access to 70 facilities, the regular exchange of information (including telemetry) and the use of national technical means (satellites) for continuous monitoring (Woolf 2011). As outlined in Chapter Two, despite Reagan's 'trust but verify' maxim, his administration's approach to arms control, even during periods of significant upturn, remained strongly focussed on verification.

## ***Commitment to Cold War Era Arms Control***

### *Strategic Parity as the Cornerstone of Arms Control and US-Russian Relations*

Despite the changed context, strategic parity was the dominant feature of NST and NST formed the pillar of the reset, as the administration made clear. Obama described NST as ‘a cornerstone of our relations with Russia’ and suggested that all other key issues were dependent on it (Obama 2010b). Such was the emphasis on arms control that some commentators, such as Burwell and Cornell (2012), criticised Obama for reinforcing arms control as the core of US-Russian relations because of the perceived detrimental impact on other issues. The Cold War concept of strategic parity and equivalence remained the cornerstone of a relationship no longer supposed to be that of adversaries. As detailed above, NST sets common numerical ceilings on warheads, missile launchers, bombers and ballistic missiles. In 2010 Joshua Pollock, writing in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, suggested that NST ‘takes parity concerns to new heights’, in order to negate any possible disadvantage, however ‘symbolic, political or psychological’ (Pollock 2010). As Blank suggested in 2009, ‘arms control and its agenda remain at the heart of bilateral Russo-American relationship’ (Blank 2009: viii).

This was reflected in official documents and testimony. The NPR stated that, ‘maintaining a stable bilateral balance [with Russia] and avoiding dangerous nuclear competition will be key objectives’ (US Department of Defense 2010c: 5). The administration was clear that NST would allow the United States to retain its second strike capacity, thus remaining rooted in Cold War era retaliatory deterrence. General Kevin P. Chilton, US Strategic Commander, emphasised that NST was ‘rooted in deterrence strategy’ and framed the benefit of the treaty as being that it ‘limits the number of ballistic missile warheads that can target the United States, missiles that pose the most prompt threat to our forces and our nation’ (US Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations 2010b). Indeed, on the ratification of the treaty, John Kerry declared that, ‘the winners are the American people, who are safer with fewer Russian missiles aimed at them’ (Baker 2010c). Analysts suggested that the pace at which the United States was downloading strategic nuclear weapons highlighted the confidence of the military in the on-going capability of nuclear forces



to provide a credible deterrent at the NST level (Kristensen 2010). In 2009, an influential report, led by William J. Perry and James R. Schlesinger, highlighted that, ‘the sizing of U.S. forces remains overwhelmingly driven by the requirements of essential equivalence and strategic stability with Russia’ (Perry *et al* 2009: xvii). NST sustained and reinforced this position.

The commitment of policy-makers to preserve parity was clear. This was so in the treaty details but also in the discourse of NST proponents and critics, with both often referencing continuities with Cold War era treaties. US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, and chief NST negotiator, Rose Gottemoeller stressed that NST was, ‘a continuation of the international arms control and non-proliferation framework that the United States has worked hard to foster and strengthen for the past 50 years’ (US Department of State 2010b). Robert Gates noted that NST, ‘strengthens strategic stability between the world’s two major nuclear powers’, as ‘strategic arms control with the Russians have since the 1970s’ but made no reference to a new relationship with Russia or the altered nature of domestic Russian politics (Gates 2010). Republican Senator Michael B. Enzi, considered one of the most conservative members of the Senate, argued that ‘the nuclear balance between the United States and Russia remains a cornerstone to global non-proliferation’ (Enzi 2010). A Senate report in October 2010 highlighted the commitment to parity and deterrence, noting in its opening paragraph that the treaty would ‘ensure strategic stability while enabling the United States to maintain an effective nuclear deterrent’ (Senate Executive Report 111-6 2010: 2). Indeed, the ultimate Senate ratification document charged that the president should regulate reductions to ensure that the number of strategic weapons possessed by Russia never exceeded a level that could create ‘a strategic imbalance [that] endangers the national security interests of the United States’ – thus inherently reifying nuclear deterrence in order to negate Russian threat (Senate Executive Report 111-6 2010). Much of the opposition to NST stemmed in part from the perception that the treaty did not go far enough to ensure parity. When explaining why he would not vote for NST Senator Grassley, a Republican member of Congress since 1981, explained that ‘a nuclear

arms control treaty can be evaluated based on the level of parity it brings to the two parties. In this regard, I believe this treaty falls short' (Grassley 2010).

While recognising the benefits of parity, including predictability and trust building, several prominent commentators emphasised the need to adapt policies to the changed political context and argued that strategic parity should no longer be the most important arms control concept. Outlining that the danger of strategic nuclear conflict with Russia was negligible, Kissinger argued that:

The U.S.-Russian relationship can no longer be defined in purely strategic terms. Nor should arms control bear the entire weight of this relationship. The contribution of the Russian-American relationship to world peace must be judged importantly in political terms—on the global issues like nuclear proliferation, environment and energy (US Senate: Committee on Foreign Relations 2010a).

Former Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration, Richard Perle, argued that precise strategic parity made little difference because the 'calculations of the consequences of nuclear exchange between the United States and Russia, a proper obsession during the Cold War, are no longer relevant' (Perle 2011). Michael E. O'Hanlon, from the Brookings Institute, implied that such an approach treats the parties as 'prospective opponents in nuclear war' (O'Hanlon 2010). Despite this, strategic parity remained a central component of NST and US-Russian relations. As Richard Burt, chief negotiator of the START I Treaty noted, NST is 'built very much along the lines of the treaty that I helped to negotiate' (Burt and Woolsey 2010). One State Department official involved in the NST negotiations suggested that the arms control of the Obama administration was 'straight from the Reagan era' (State Department official 2014).

### *Trust but Verify*

A further, and related, concept employed in the construction of NST was the commitment to extensive, on-site verification. Two specific points are relevant here. The first is the retained commitment to verification that, although simplified from the Cold War era, was still extensive and, despite some differences, based on similar formats to START verification (Myers 2010; Woolf 2011: 11). Verification under NST is more flexible, simpler and less intrusive (for instance, NST does not set sub-limits on force structuring and has looser counting rules) but overall is similar in scale to START despite the different context. This is especially notable considering that the first page of NST outlines that the parties are working together to ‘forge a new strategic relationship based on mutual trust’ (NST 2010: 1). While there are ten fewer annual inspections under NST than START, the scope of what is collected per inspection is much greater. START’s twenty-eight inspections covered seventy facilities but NST covers only thirty-five sites following the centralisation of the former-Soviet nuclear facilities into Russia (Kimball 2010). The Union of Concerned Scientists described NST as having, ‘the most intrusive verification system ever implemented for counting nuclear warheads’ (Union of Concerned Scientists 2010). From an equally practical perspective, NST was also always likely to be simpler as it was recognised that START was unnecessarily complex. This point has been made by a number of U.S. negotiators (2014) and the complexity of START was noted by the Congressional Research Service (Woolf 2011: i).

The second relevant point was the way that this verification, and the need for it, was expressed. Actors regularly utilised the Cold War phrase ‘trust but verify’ and referenced Cold War approaches and presidents, particularly Reagan. The connections to the Cold War, and Cold War presidents, were presented as a strength of the treaty by those lobbying for ratification. Then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stressed that ‘I want to make clear that we have adhered to the Russian proverb that President Reagan frequently employed, trust, but verify’ (Clinton 2010a). Obama argued that NST matched the ambition of Reagan in 1987 and accused Senators blocking NST of ‘breaking President Reagan’s rule’ (Obama 2010d). This emphasis on Cold War era style verification was embraced by those

that opposed the treaty, who often criticised the treaty's verification measures for not being similar enough to Cold War era verification. Republican Senator Jon Barrasso criticised the treaty for having 'a lot of trust but precious little verification' (Barrasso 2010). In 2010 Sarah Palin argued that:

New START's verification regime is weaker than the treaty it replaces, making it harder for us to detect Russian cheating [...] At the height of the Cold War, President Reagan pursued missile defense while also pursuing verifiable arms control with the then-Soviet Union. That position was right in the 1980s, and it is still right today (Palin 2010).

Analytical elites and commentators opposed to NST made similar points. Former US Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Commission and conservative commentator Ken Blackwell criticised Obama for not emphasising verification to the same degree that Reagan had, suggesting that the administration's Russia policy was 'trust, don't verify' which, he argued, was a mistake because Russia could not be trusted (Blackwell 2011). The Heritage Foundation also sought to undermine NST by referencing Reagan. The organisation argued that the Obama administration's approach to arms control 'is the exact opposite of President Reagan', arguing that the approach was closer to an approach of 'trust, but don't bother to verify' and that Reagan would not have signed NST (Heritage Foundation 2010a).

Of course, increased transparency is an important mechanism for improving trust (Chayes and Chayes 1995; Zarimpas 2003: 8). However, the strong emphasis on, and descriptions of, verification during negotiations and ratification, also signalled a lack of trust towards Russia. Actors often focused on verification through a prism of mistrust and the need to monitor Russia, rather than as a tool to further improve trust. As Lawrence Freedman has highlighted, the 'trust but verify' maxim helps to build trust but also highlights a lack of existing trust, with both states not trusting the other to implement the agreement (Freedman 2009: 4).

This reportedly played out during negotiations. US treaty negotiators describe the US negotiation team as being more focused on verification than their Russian counterparts and wanting higher levels of verification. This, at times, was reportedly taken as a sign of mistrust by the Russians who disputed the need for such levels of verification. A government official (2014) involved in the negotiation and ratification of NST suggested that the heavy US focus on verification undermined Russian trust, with the Russian team wanting less intrusive verification based on the changed spirit of the times. Elbridge Colby, a NST negotiator before becoming a Fellow at the Centre for a New American Security, recalls that the Russian side had pushed back on US verification suggestions and felt a ‘sense of indignity and humiliation’ by the emphasis the US team placed on verification (Colby 2014). A Department of Defense official involved in the negotiations observed the same phenomenon, suggesting that the Russian team found the intensive focus on verification ‘insulting’ and suggested that verification seemed to matter less to the Russian negotiation team (Department of Defense official 2014). A senior State Department negotiator with over thirty years of experience also suggested that the Russian team wanted less verification than the US side (Senior State Department NST negotiator 2014).

While Russia and the United States remained the dominant nuclear powers, the political and nuclear context had changed. Other states possessed and were developing nuclear weapons in an international system that was no longer bipolar and within which the United States and Russia were no longer adversaries. This was not reflected in the retained commitment to the ‘trust but verify’ maxim generally, and the desire to have verification that mirrored START specifically, despite the fact that many US officials involved in negotiations recognised Russia as a reliable partner on arms control (discussed below). Trust will be of increasing importance in any further reductions, or in addressing tactical nuclear weapons, yet these narratives emphasised a disproportionate mistrust. Such rigorous verification had not always been negotiated with other nuclear states, despite the proliferation of weapons. For instance India and Pakistan, neither of which has signed the NPT, tested nuclear

weapons in 1998 whilst China had continued to develop sophisticated weapons and delivery systems (Lewis 2009). Despite these developments the United States had limited transparency into China's nuclear intentions and programme. As Bollfrass and Kim have noted, 'because of the secrecy surrounding the Chinese nuclear arsenal, it is impossible to know the exact number of warheads China possesses' (Bollfrass and Kim 2013). However, a Department of Defense official (2014) involved in the negotiation and ratification of NST suggests that there are far fewer voices expressing concern about transparency into China compared with Russia. Similarly, Elbridge Colby, who has experience working across a range of roles in government and think-tanks, suggests that he has witnessed 'a very different ideational approach to Russia than China' (Colby 2014). Another negotiator confirmed that China was discussed but it was generally 'assumed that China would behave responsibly' (Former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014). This suggests that the focus on Russia may not have stemmed from entirely material reasons and that both habit and mistrust were important factors. As Rojansky suggested in 2010, '[w]e are in a different era in respect to the US-Russia relationship, so more stringent requirements maybe weren't necessary' (Rojansky 2010).

#### *Commitment to the START Model*

The commitment to Cold War era arms control principles was demonstrated by the attachment to the original START model and criticisms of differences between START and NST. This is true in part for the negotiators and administration but particularly for many Senators. In an analysis of post-1989 Western arms control Krause and Latham suggested in 1998 that the, 'security-building practices of the West are rooted in powerfully resonating beliefs, or basic mental images, regarding threat and danger as well as appropriate responses' (Krause and Latham 1998: 24). Over a decade later this argument still seemed to have pertinence. Gottemoeller described NST as, 'a hybrid of START and the Moscow Treaty' (US Department of State 2010a), which, although recognising the post-Cold War context, nevertheless demonstrates the lingering attachment to Cold War concepts. Indeed, in 2002 Gottemoeller criticised the Bush administration's approach to arms control. She

argued that it was moving too quickly away from the concepts and approaches of the past, and was particularly critical of unilateral reductions and informal treaties, arguing that this could undermine strategic stability and deterrence (Gottemoeller 2002).

A former US official involved in NST negotiations reports that some negotiators in Geneva felt that a new type of treaty was possible but that the Washington based bureaucracy wanted to maintain a START based model that would 'keep tabs' on Russia. Overall though, the official observed 'a ready consensus' around a simplified START model (former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014). One negotiator remarked that some of the younger negotiators on the team wanted to amend the treaty more than senior negotiators and some occasionally questioned why NST had to be so similar to START (Department of Defense official 2014). This suggests that generation and professional experiences and the logic of habit may have played a role in the adoption of a treaty similar to START. Indeed, some negotiators themselves noted the difficulty in separating NST negotiations from Cold War experiences. One experienced negotiator suggested that it was easier for younger officers to negotiate without reference to Cold War experiences (State Department official involved in NST negotiations 2014). Another experienced defence official suggested that Cold War experiences influenced negotiators from opening up to the possibility of a new approach' (Department of Defense official 2014). A senior State Department negotiator reports that some negotiators did consider alternative approaches but, overall, both sides were more comfortable with the old model (Senior State Department NST negotiator 2014). Treaty negotiator Elbridge Colby similarly argues that, despite some novel changes, NST was 'a continuation of the START Treaty' despite not having the 'same strategic underpinning' (Colby 2014). Obama has argued that 'too often, the United States and Russia only communicate on a narrow range of issues, or let old habits within our bureaucracy stand in the way of progress' (Obama 2009). It seems cultural and professional backgrounds also played a role in the negotiation of NST.

The attachment to the START model was even more profound for many Republican Senators and conservative analytical elites. They often challenged divergences from the original START model, even when changes were made for practical reasons. For instance, some Senators and conservative analysts focused on the lower number of telemetric exchanges, which was an important feature of START (for example, New START Working Group 2010). However, as the administration (Bureau of Verification, Compliance and Implementation 2010) and other analysts (Theilmann 2010; Kimball 2010) have pointed out, telemetry was no longer required because the new terms of inspections allows for the sharing of information previously available from telemetric exchanges. As it served no practical purpose, some nuclear arms analysts have speculated that telemetric exchanges may have only been included in the treaty because of Senate opposition (Washington-based policy analyst 2014).

Similarly, there was a vocal concern about the number of on-site inspections falling to eighteen per year rather than the twenty-eight permitted under START (see Isakson in, Baker 2010a). Again, this response seems primarily based on comparisons with START rather than details. As outlined earlier, although there were fewer inspections, each inspection collected far more information and there were far fewer facilities to inspect (thirty-five down from seventy). In the view of one Department of Defense official involved in ratification efforts, Senators ‘jumped on’ top-line numbers rather than meaningful details. The official worked on anticipating Senate questions and preparing answers and, he suggests, was mainly successful in doing this because older Senators remembered START discussions and ‘were reviving some of that’ (Department of Defense official 2014). One government official involved in providing briefings for Senators on NST suggests that he witnessed reliance on historical references and assumptions because, in part, Senators has limited understanding of recent arms control. He reports that some Senators genuinely distrusted Russia and felt that it was a state the United States should not work with (US government official involved in negotiation and ratification of NST). This further suggests that generational issues and the logic of habit and institutionalised assumptions influenced support for a treaty that matched START very specifically – a treaty that had been designed for, and negotiated with, an adversary.



Of course, as noted, there were a number of factors encouraging a detailed bilateral treaty structure employing similar concepts to START, most importantly the size of US and Russian nuclear arsenals. However, some analysts indicate that other approaches may have been possible or could have been considered. For example, Henry Sokolski, Executive Director at the Non-proliferation Policy Education Centre, argued that any follow-on to NST could take years and that NST (or at least NST talks) could have also addressed other strategic threats, such as China's growing nuclear arsenal (Cohen, Korb, Sololski and Halperin 2010). Despite the significant gap between US and Russian nuclear arsenals compared to all other nuclear states, US and Russian levels of strategic warheads and delivery systems had reduced significantly and some commentators, such as Kissinger, argued that nuclear arsenals in other states were approaching the point where they may have a bearing on the strategic balance (Kissinger 2010). Similarly, Hansell and Perfiliev have argued that global strategic stability, and the future of arms control and disarmament, depend 'overwhelmingly upon decisions in Washington, Moscow, and Beijing' but that Chinese nuclear doctrine has yet to influence thinking in the United States and Russia (Hansell and Perfiliev 2011: 123).

Even during the 1990s analysts noted that decisions about the US nuclear posture should be based on 'a wider set of issues and relationships than those that occurred during the United States-Soviet bipolar debate' (Hall, Capello and Lambert 1998: 8), whilst analysts Weitz (2010), senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, has argued that China needs to be factored into US-Russian nuclear arms control. Shea (229-230) has suggested that although it would complicate negotiations, expanding arms control from bilateral to multilateral arms reduction arrangements may bring benefits in the form of transparency. He also considers the possibility of an independent verification entity to help buffer periodic tensions and the complications of additional states. While, as Pifer (2010: 33-34) outlines, there would have been significant challenges to including third-party states, consideration could have been given to incorporating confidence-building measures with additional states. Indeed, Hanseel and Perfiliev suggest that several of the START confidence-building

measures could be taken trilaterally (Hansell and Perfilyev 2011: 139). However, it has been reported that Gottemoeller, the lead NST negotiator, was clear with negotiators that it was not yet time for a multilateral treaty (Former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014).

Although it is impossible to know whether an alternative approach could have been negotiated and ratified, and there were material reasons for focusing on bilateral arsenals, the failure to consider the potential for alternatives highlights the attachment to Cold War concepts and models. This not only reified a deterrence model but potentially limited the opportunity to achieve Obama's stated ambition of abolishing nuclear weapons. As Wheeler notes:

Nuclear abolition will never be achievable whilst governments view it as moves in a zero-sum game; instead, what is needed it for leaders to transcend this way of thinking and learn to base their security on mutual trust rather than mutual fear (Wheeler 2009: 2).

Ultimately, as Richard Burt, chief negotiator of the START I Treaty noted, NST is 'built very much along the lines of the treaty that I helped to negotiate' (Burt and Woolsey 2014). One State Department official involved in the NST negotiations suggested that the arms control of the Obama administration was, 'straight from the Reagan era' (State Department official 2014).

In conclusion, this legacy provided a clearly defined and well understood roadmap for negotiating arms control details with Russia and, as such, contributed to the successful completion of NST. This provided a tangible base for the reset. Institutionalised expertise, knowledge and the logic of habit provided a self-explanatory and tested framework for the setting, and subsequent achievement, of goals. By encouraging policy-makers and negotiators to engage in regular and lengthy discussions there was an increased understanding between the two states and

the development of positive relationships. However, the reliance on Cold War era concepts and models (and negotiators) potentially limited, or slowed, the long-term progress that could be made with Russia by providing a seemingly obvious roadmap that was narrow in its scope and reified a structure based on that of adversaries, and implied, despite arguments to the contrary, an engrained lack of trust. The result was to reinforce nuclear deterrence as central to US-Russian relations. The use of experienced individuals and institutions contributed to the reproduction of practices and ideas because, as previously outlined, organisations are built on rules and routines and develop specific expertise which shape the way events are understood and provide rationality. Gottemoeller hailed the treaty as a ‘move beyond Cold War mentalities and [a means to] chart a fresh start in our relations with Russia’ (US Department of State 2010a). However, while positive for the reset and in increasing transparency, the treaty was, in large part, rooted in the Cold War.

## **Ideational Legacy 2: Entrenched Attitudes: Bilateral Relations Understood in Terms of Competition and Mistrust**

### ***Introduction***

A second important Cold War ideational legacy was a retained strain of thinking within foreign policy circles that understood US-Russian relations as being based on zero-sum competition rather than partnership. This was despite the recognition of Russia’s importance to several significant international security issues, and was underpinned by mistrust of Russia. As already noted, the official government position was that the United States and Russia were no longer adversaries and that a new era of cooperation had begun. As Biden stated, there was ‘no good reason not to trust one another’ (Biden 2011). However, the actions and discourse of many influential Republican members of Congress and right-leaning think-tanks stood in contrast to the official position.

In her analysis of trust, Larson (1997: 715) argues that actors often draw incorrect conclusions about another state’s behaviour and motivations because of lingering

stereotypes that are exacerbated by a failure to explore the motivations of the other state in detail. The use of historical analogies and heightened rhetoric suggest that this seemed to play an important role in opposition mistrust and sense of competition, with critics, guided by historical stereotypes, focusing on Russia's presumed identity and the anticipated future bilateral relationship. This legacy was most evident in concerns about potential Russian cheating on NST terms and the representation of NST and the reset in competitive terms. Assumptions were shaped by Cold War experiences and perceptions of its identity and relationship with the United States, as well as institutional knowledge and habit. The legacy of competition was also displayed, to a far lesser degree, by the treaty negotiators. This limited the wider US approach towards Russia and afforded Obama less flexibility in compromising on issues with Russia, such as missile defence. It also sent mixed messages to Russia regarding the willingness of the wider US foreign policy community to re-engage Russia in a new relationship.

### ***Cold War Influences***

There were three important Cold War influences for this legacy, two of which have been outlined in Chapter Two and one that is unique to arms control. The first relevant Cold War influence was the mistrust that defined the Cold War, with US perceptions of the Soviet Union as secretive and deceitful. As outlined earlier, this discourse regularly featured in policy-maker language and was a core element within policy planning documents. It was a core assumption within US government for over forty years. This mistrust was also reflected in the analysis of influential think-tanks, many of which formed during the Cold War, such as the Heritage Foundation in 1973. The second over-arching Cold War influence was the understanding, and experience, of the Cold War as a zero-sum competition – viewed in terms of relative gains. This extended to arms control negotiations which, although necessary for mutual security, were conducted, at least until Reagan and Gorbachev, within the parameters of the on-going Cold War assumption that the United States and Soviet Union were competitors. NST debates in the United States, and to a lesser degree NST negotiations, highlighted the persistence of these attitudes towards Russia and understandings of the US-Russian dynamic.

The third Cold War influence, which was specific to arms control, was the long-standing assumption that the USSR would violate treaties if not monitored. This was a feature of US considerations from the earliest days of the Cold War. Clark Clifford's report in 1946 to Truman on US-Soviet relations focused heavily on Soviet violations. Over a quarter of the report detailed Soviet violations over a range of issues, including of the Tehran Declaration, Lend-Lease and of the principles applying to mutual aid (Clifford 1946: 27-51). While viewing it as unlikely that the USSR intended deliberate military conflict involving the United States, planners highlighted that Soviet deception meant that even 'surprise atomic attack' could not be ruled out. NSC 68 set out that agreements had to be enforceable and 'not susceptible to violation without detection' (National Security Council 1950).

The expectation of Soviet treaty violation remained throughout the Cold War. In 1964 Deputy Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Adrian S. Fisher reflected on internal government discussions concerning the terms of any agreement on nuclear testing limits with the USSR. He outlined that the issue under consideration was not if there would be Soviet cheating (it was accepted that there was a possibility of this) but what the consequences would be of treaty violation and creating a quota where cheating would not be critically detrimental to the United States (Fisher 1964: 36&69). Theodore C. Sorenson (1964: 80), a speech writer for Kennedy and Special Counsel to the President, recalls that the drafting of Kennedy's speech to the country prior to Senate discussions on ratification of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty required a significant amount of discussion regarding how the United States could be sure the USSR would not cheat and how violations would be detected. Annual publications since 1981 of the *Soviet Military Report* highlighted Soviet violations and further entrenched the idea of the need to monitor the Soviet Union within political culture. Each report raised violation issues. The 1984 *Soviet Military Report* detailed that a new Soviet radar violated the 1972 ABM Treaty radar by not being located on the Soviet periphery as required by the treaty (US Defense Intelligence Agency 1984). The 1985 *Soviet Military Report* found that, although the evidence was 'ambiguous', the USSR was in 'probable violation of SALT II' (US

Defense Intelligence Agency 1985). The 1986 *Soviet Military Report* detailed construction of the Krasnoyarsk ballistic missile detection and tracking radar which violated the ABM treaty (US Defense Intelligence Agency 1986).

This theme was not restricted to bureaucratic documents, and was an important feature of political discourse. In relation to the verification of SALT, a US Senate Foreign Relations Committee report in 1979 stated that, ‘it is agreed that the United States cannot rely upon or trust the Russians to comply with (the treaty’s) terms’ (Krass 1985: 285). Discussing the importance of arms control in 1984, Reagan warned of ‘mounting evidence that provisions of agreements have been violated’ by the USSR (Reagan 1984). Reagan (1985b) publicly mentioned that the United States felt that the USSR was in violation of a number of previous agreements, such as the ban on biological and toxin weapons, the Helsinki Accords and agreements on strategic nuclear weapons. Think-tanks reinforced the narrative of the USSR as likely to break treaty violations. A report by the Heritage Foundation in 1987 warned against ‘fall[ing] for Gorbachev’s new politics and new tactics’ and urged policy-makers to ‘expose Soviet disinformation efforts [...] expose more vigorously than in the past Soviet violations of its treaty promises’ (Pines 1987:10).

### ***Mistrust of Russia: Expectations of Cheating***

Scholars such as Lieven (2004c) and Tsygankov (2009a) have highlighted that fear and mistrust of Russia have been sustained from the Cold War era and have a prominence in US political culture. Similarly, Blank (2011: 13) suggests that there are domestic groups within the United States that have a long standing and fundamental mistrust of Moscow, driven by deep-rooted fears. One former US official now working in a leading US think-tank (2014) suggests that Russia is often seen as a special case, in part because Cold War history influences the way in which it is perceived. One leading think-tank expert suggests that there remains a strain of severe hatred of Russia with US foreign policy circles that is, in part, based on a ‘caricature of a the Russian national character’ (2014). Deep-rooted mistrust certainly appeared to play a role during NST debates, with concerns about Russian

cheating a key theme. These narratives were often based on assumption and exaggeration rather than specific information.

Many of the allegations of cheating stemmed from the publication of the State Department's 2010 arms control compliance report. The report noted that the United States had raised several compliance issues. The findings on noncompliance related primarily to the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention and the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, although the issues were relatively minor and several had already been resolved (US Department of State 2010c: 8-9). The violations certainly did not constitute significant military cheating, as defined by Chayes and Chayes (1998: 9-22). For example, while Russia completed the destruction of its Chemical Weapons Production Facilitation it had not met the conversion deadline. However, as Collina and Kimball (2010) note, this was primarily a consequence of the difficulties of the process and the United States was also behind schedule. Not only were the compliance issues relatively minor but the report also outlined that Russia had been in compliance with the central limits for the fifteen years of the START treaty. Organisations specialising in nuclear security, such as the Arms Control Association, emphasised that the report should actually provide Senators with 'additional confidence that Russia would comply with New START' (Collina and Kimball 2010).

Despite this, the issue of potential cheating was seized upon by opponents of NST and the reset, who, influenced by perceptions of Russia's 'type' and Soviet history, focused on non-compliance issues. Indeed, a senior State Department official with over thirty years of experience reports that historically those analysing the report have always paid more attention to Russia than the other states in the report. This is in part, the official suggests, because of historically informed views of Russia (Senior State Department NST negotiator 2014). Another leading US-Russian analyst with experience working within government suggests that many policy-makers are ready to believe the worst about Russia, and this appeared to be the case in relation to cheating (Former US official now working in a leading think-tank 2014). Many Republican policy-makers and right-leaning analytical elites were

concerned that less intrusive verification measures would afford Russia opportunity to cheat and framed Russia, in exaggerated terms and often with reference to the Cold War and original START, as a serial violator and untrustworthy. Deyermond (2012) has argued that many Republicans during this period viewed Russia as an aggressive, antidemocratic state and a threat to US security. The allegations of cheating support this argument, and the position frequently appeared to have been influenced by historical framing and simplistic characterisations of Russia. Senator Jim DeMint argued that, ‘the New START was crafted without a serious review of past treaty violations’ (Demint 2010). Senator Kit Bond, who was first elected to Congress in the 1980s, claimed that the treaty was weaker on verification than START, meaning that United States would, ‘have much greater trouble determining if Russia is cheating and given Russia’s track record, that’s a real problem’ (Butler 2010). Senator Jon Barrasso suggested that, ‘Russia has a record of non-compliance and violation under the original START treaty’ (Barrasso 2010). Senator Inhofe stated that ‘they cheat and we do not’ (Congressional Record: Senate 2010: S10796). Palin argued that NST’s, ‘verification is weaker than the treaty it replaces, making it harder for us to detect Russian cheating’ (Palin 2010). One government official involved in providing briefings for Senators on NST reports that from those meetings he was left with the impression that some Senators genuinely distrusted Russia and felt that it was a state the United States should not work with (US official involved in negotiation and ratification of NST 2014).

Such positions were mirrored by right-leaning think-tanks. Heritage Foundation paper titles alone capture the message that this section of the analytical elite was sending: *If Russia Looked in a Mirror, it’d See a Cold War Thinker; Don’t Get Scammed By Russia Again; and The “New START” Treaty: Did the Russians Have Their Fingers Crossed?* Peter Brookes (2009), Senior Fellow for National Security Affairs at the Heritage Foundation, suggested that Russia could seek clever ways to cheat in the same way that he considered Russia to have cheated previously. Such was the level of mistrust that, one State Department official reports, one conservative think-tank released a report suggesting that NST was written in Russian, subsequently arguing that it could not be well understood by Senators and



was favouring Russia – playing to fears of Russian duplicity (State Department official 2014). Such think-tank framings were arguably particularly problematic because of its reinforcement of anti-Russian political culture and stereotyped framing. US officials have noted a lack of expertise amongst Senators about Russia and suggested that much of their knowledge relies on conservative think-tanks, or old assumptions (NST negotiators April 2014). One US official involved with briefing Senators on NST reported that he was surprised by just how important the think-tank community was during the ratification campaign. US officials, he suggests, made concerted efforts to win over think-tanks, or to address their points because of their influence on Senators. The official considered Heritage Foundation Backgrounders to be a particularly important source of information for Republican Senators. The rush to condemn Russia based on the compliance report without fully considering the details was not limited exclusively to Republicans and right-leaning think-tanks. *The Washington Post* was forced to change the original title of its coverage – ‘Report Finds Russians May Not be in Compliance, Could Sink New START Pact’ – because it gave the impression that Russia had not been compliant with START and softened it to, ‘Report findings about Russia could complicate debate on new START pact’ (Pincus and Sheridan 2010a).

That these framings of Russia were informed by entrenched attitudes, historical comparisons and assumptions of Russian identity is given further weight when compared with the view of experienced negotiators who understood the detail of arms control agreements and compliance. NST negotiators report that US negotiators generally felt that, in terms of arms control, Russia was trustworthy. A retired US official that had been involved with negotiations in the Cold War and post-Cold War eras felt that Russia ‘would be a reliable arms control partner’ (former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014). A State Department negotiator (2014) with extensive arms control experience recalls that he viewed Russia ‘as a reliable arms control partner’ and that they had been generally reliable through the history of nuclear arms control. The official stressed that Russia had fulfilled the fundamental obligations of START, such as meeting the seven year limit to reduce accountable warheads to a ceiling of 6,000, and that difficulties were primarily technical in nature. Other negotiators agreed that Russia was considered dependable in relation to

arms control (NST negotiators 2014). Indeed, former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, suggests that, although there had been some violations, ‘on the big issues they did implement them [...] on the whole they cooperated’ and suggested that while there significant concerns about biological weapon development, issues of nuclear security were conducted ‘in good faith’ by the end of the Cold War (Matlock 2015). As such, some officials were surprised at the extent of Republican criticism to NST. One US official (2014) noted his surprise that the reactions were, ‘like the 1980s’ when people feared that the Russians might have secret facilities and he suggested that similar fears were surfacing again.

The extent of distrust seems particularly overblown when one considers that Russia would have very little incentive or opportunity to cheat. Firstly, as has been outlined, Russia was already constrained by economic factors and needed to make cuts. Secondly, even if Russia did plan to cheat, signing the treaty gave the United States far greater understanding of Russian weapons and provided a deterrent to cheating. James N. Miller, Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Policy, outlined the detailed verification framework to Senators and explained the processes in place for addressing concerns about possible cheating (US Senate: Committee on Foreign Relations 2010c). Government officials and arms control experts were clear that the verifications in place were robust and sufficient enough to detect cheating. The reported view within the Department of Defense was that verification was robust and there was ‘no fear that [the] Russian could cheat’ (Department of Defense official 2014). A Washington-based policy analyst (2010a) argued that NST verification had ample capacity to recognise any violation that could endanger US security. The Arms Control Association concluded that verification processes would ‘provide high confidence that Russia is complying with the new, lower limits on deployed strategic nuclear warheads and delivery systems’ (Kimball 2010). The Union of Concerned Scientists argued that one of the main accomplishments of NST was that ‘it streamlines the verification measures from START I without sacrificing any essential information’ (Union of Concerned Scientists 2010). Despite this, it seems that Republican opposition and right-leaning think-tanks ignored the changed context and Russia’s history as an arms control partner and made their criticisms partly based on assumptions and prejudices.

### ***Competition with Russia***

The idea that the United States and Russia were competitors rather than partners in global security was evident during NST ratification debates and surrounding commentary, with actors frequently defining the relationship in zero-sum terms. There remained a strong sense, particularly for many Republicans and right-leaning analytical elites, that the United States should still define itself against Russia, especially in terms of security, and that the relationship was primarily one of competition.

Mitt Romney's argument that the treaty gave, 'far more to the Russians than the United States' (Romney 2010) was typical of the anti-NST arguments. Romney complained that NST, 'gives Russia a massive nuclear weapon advantage over the United States' (Romney 2010), accused Obama of having 'frittered away American bargaining chips and got nothing in return' (Romney 2011) and referred to Russia as America's 'number one geopolitical foe', (Romney 2012). Senator Jim Demint, the highest-ranking elected official associated within the Tea Party and a member of the Senate Committee On Foreign Relations, argued that seeking parity rather than advantage was 'absurd and dangerous' (S. HRG. 111-738 2010: 71). Senator John Thune, chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, suggested that to rush through NST would result in a 'Christmas gift to the Russians' (Thune 2010).

Republican Senators were particularly concerned that NST would result in unilateral US disarmament, despite the fact that this would make little or no difference to the strategic balance. This concern, focused on competition rather than what the terms would mean, stemmed from the treaty's counting rules on Strategic Delivery Vehicles (SDVs). Whereas Russia was already below the treaty limits, the United States would have to reduce approximately sixty of its SDVs. Senator Kit Bond argued that:

The first thing we must understand about this treaty is that it forces the United States to reduce unilaterally our forces [...] in order to meet treaty limits. On the other hand, the Russians will actually be allowed to increase their deployed forces because they currently fall below the treaty's limits (US Congressional Record 2010a: S8052).

Other influential Senators mirrored this tone. Senator Jon Kyl portrayed the treaty in zero-sum terms, assessing what Russia achieved gains at the expense of the United States. Kyl questioned:

What were the benefits of the treaty for the United States vis-à-vis Russia? What were the concessions we made to Russia? What do they get out of it? What do we get out of it? My own view is they got virtually everything out of it (US Congressional Record 2010b: 10320).

Senator Bob Corker questioned whether, 'we really get anything out of this treaty at all' based on the concern that 'we are the ones that are actually making the cuts, not them' (quoted in Baker 2010a). In light of Russia's dependence on nuclear weapons, Senator Sessions suggested that Russia could interpret NST as 'a sign of weakness and perhaps pursue a more muscular foreign policy directed against the west' (Sessions 2010). Palin complained that NST 'requires the U.S. to reduce our nuclear weapons and allows the Russians to increase theirs. This is one-sided and makes no strategic sense' (Palin 2010).

This sense of the relationship being a competition rather than a partnership was also found in the analysis of right-leaning think-tanks. Research Fellow Baker Spring, of Heritage Foundation, questioned if the Russians were the 'winners' on missile defence in NST (Spring 2010). Keith Payne, president of the National Institute for Public Policy, complained that the treaty was not reciprocal and that the United

States was giving up more than Russia, lamenting the fact that Russia had an ‘advantage’ in terms of tactical nuclear weapons which, he suggested, means the ‘Russians are now more explicit and threatening about tactical war-fighting including in regional conflicts’ (Payne 2010). Peter Brookes, of the Heritage Foundation, bemoaned Russia having a ‘10:1 advantage in “battlefield” nukes’ (Brookes 2009). As noted above, NST critics also complained about agreeing to common limits with Russia as the Russian military was likely to reduce the number anyway because of financial and capacity restraints. Such was the degree of framing of Russia as a competitor and anti-US state that in November 2010 Heritage Action released anti-NST mailers in ten states, depicting the Republican Senators in those states as being supportive of NST and putting US security at stake. The ‘Will You Act?’ mailers, which depicted Obama standing between Putin and Ahmadinejad, named the individual Senators and urged the public to press their Senators to drop their tentative support for NST (Rogin 2010).

While this framing of competition with Russia was most apparent in the responses of many Republicans and conservative think-tanks, treaty negotiators also viewed the treaty in competitive terms to a lesser degree. As outlined, NST negotiators generally considered Russia a reliable arms control partner and many felt that interactions fostered better relations and understanding. Despite this, NST negotiations on an issue identified as being in the common interest and forming an agreement between partners, proved to be competitive and difficult, with negotiators seeking to extract as much as possible and with relative advantage remaining a concern. Several of the negotiation team commented on the competitive nature of talks, with one suggesting that Department of Defense officials were more focused on relative gains than State Departments officials (Department of Defense official 2014). Indeed, one negotiator reported that such were the difficulties that Obama and Medvedev had to speak directly to resolve sticking points (former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014).

As with sustained commitment to the START model, some negotiators themselves noted the difficulty in separating NST negotiations from Cold War negotiations. One

experienced State Department negotiator suggested that, whilst negotiations helped to foster improved relations it was, nevertheless ‘mentally hard to get the Cold War out of your head’ (State Department official 2014). An experienced official in the Department of Defense reported the same experience, suggesting that Cold War experiences did make it ‘hard to drop the [same] ways of thinking’ (Department of Defense official 2014). One senior negotiator suggested that the younger generation was ‘much more open-minded about Russia’ (Senior State Department NST negotiator 2014) whilst a more junior negotiator suggested that some of the older members of the delegation and suggested that many ‘still spoke as if it were the 1980s’ (US government official involved in NST negotiation and ratification 2014).

In summary, the main influence of this legacy, derived from entrenched attitudes and assumptions based on historical framings, was on the nature the ratification debates, which served to highlight continued distrust of Russia and had some limited influence on the negotiations. This undermined the message of partnership being promoted by the Executive Office in two ways. Firstly, it delayed ratification of the treaty and dampened the initial positive rhetoric around NST. The Russian Duma delayed its own ratification until NST had been ratified in the United States and anti-Russian arguments were carefully monitored in Russia. Republican demands for changes led to Lavrov warning the Senate that any changes could destroy the pact and that the treaty could not be reopened (BBC 2010). Secondly, the legacy reinforced narratives of competition and cast doubt on the US desire for a lasting improvement in relations. By demonstrating an on-going desire to achieve relative gains, some influential policy-makers and analytical elites ensured that Russia was receiving mixed messages from the US foreign policy community. This contributed to a self-perpetuating culture of mistrust and competition and the nature of ratification debates provided evidence that further cuts or treaties would have great difficulty achieving ratification.

### **Ideational Legacy 3: Missile Defence Remains Critical to Providing for US and Allies’ Security from Russian Aggression**

## ***Introduction***

Attitudes towards, and assumptions about, US national missile defence (NMD) in relation to Russia, formed a third important Cold War ideational legacy. Some important US actors portrayed missile defence as crucial for protecting CEE from potential Russian aggression – typically portrayed in Cold War style language of defending democracies from an imperialist Russia. While this was not the official US position, it was a key narrative for NST opponents. NST opponents also lobbied against cooperation with Russia on missile defence because of the perception that Russia was more likely to be an enemy than a partner and could not be trusted. These positions made ratification challenging as many actors, based on the treaty preamble, saw NST and missile defence as interlinked.

## ***Cold War Influences***

Six Cold War influences were especially relevant for this legacy. Four of these were core Cold War understandings that have been addressed in Chapters Two and Three. The first was the understanding of the Soviet Union as an aggressive, imperialist power – underpinned by a historical Russian imperialism and the Russian character. The second relevant broad Cold War understanding was the institutionalised mistrust of the Soviet Union that was a core feature of the Cold War and underpinned US policy and planning throughout the Cold War. The third Cold War influence was the decades of experience of viewing bilateral relations through the prism of ideology, with analysis of Soviet and Russian actions, and predicted future policies, assessed through this lens. The fourth Cold War influence was, as outlined, the shift in US policy at the start of the Cold War to actively foster European integration and commit to the defence of Europe, with actors seeing strong connections between European security and US interests. The Cold War's end affirmed US perceptions that the United States has security and civilisational ties with Europe. Each of these understandings was evident in NST debates concerning missile defence.

The final two Cold War influences were specific to NMD. The first of these was that US NMD has its origins in the Cold War era (Baucom 1992; Federation of American

Scientists: 2012; Mankoff 2012b: 331-332). The idea of a missile defence system to provide the United States and its allies with a shield from Soviet missiles emerged most prominently under the Reagan administration with the introduction of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Reagan described SDI as 'a program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat', outlining that it was designed to defend 'the United States, or our allies, or our vital interests' (Reagan 1983b). Such narratives fell squarely within core Cold War framings of defending democracy and containing Soviet imperialism.

The second specific NMD Cold War influence was the common narrative, particularly prominent on the right of US politics, that Reagan's SDI initiative was an important factor in achieving Cold War victory (Schrecker 2004: 3-4; Mann 2009: 345; Matlock 2010: 323). Former US National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane suggested that it forced the Soviet Union to the negotiating table because they were convinced that they could not match US military capability (quoted in Evangelista 2004: 100). Kissinger (1994a: 775) suggested that the key factors in ending the Cold War were NATO's deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe and American commitment to the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), arguing that the scale of the US build-up under Reagan reinforced doubts in the Soviet leadership about whether they could afford the arms race economically and, more importantly, whether they could sustain it technologically. Missile defence is particularly important to the Republican Party because it is seen as the successor to Reagan's SDI and remains an important issue for Republicans (Deyermond 2012: 78). Souva and Rhode (2007: 18) highlight the difference between support for SDI between parties, suggesting that in the 100<sup>th</sup> Congress forty-two percent of Republican-identifying elites strongly supported full funding for SDI compared to sixteen percent of Democrat elites. Commitment has varied between administrations, with Republicans generally being more supportive. In the post-Cold War era Republicans and conservative analytical elites, such as Kristol and Kagan (1996: 25) continued to lobby for greater spending on missile defence. The development of the idea of missile defence is linked to conceptions of US military and political superiority, as well as security.



### ***Missile Defence to Protect Democratic European Allies from Russian Aggression***

For some actors, particularly right-leaning analytical elites and some Republicans, it was necessary to exclude Russia from cooperation and information sharing around NMD and to use NMD to protect European allies from Russian aggression. Such arguments were often couched in Cold War terms and analogy, concerning Russian imperialist tendencies and the need to defend European, democratic allies. Influential policy-makers, think-tanks and ethnic lobbies made this argument in relation to NST and the reset, with ratification debates and the surrounding commentary focusing on the relationship between NST and potential limits on US missile defence (Deyermond 2012: 78-79). Actors relied heavily on Cold War history to decode Russian identity and to frame the US role in Europe. Despite the reset, events in recent years, such as the Russo-Georgian War in 2008 and Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute in 2009, challenged many of the post-Cold War expectations that Russia would conform to a US-led system and move towards the West. For some, this contributed to a reliance on stereotypes and Cold War framings to ensure clarity about the Russian identity. This enhanced, as Deyermond (2012: 83) notes, the focus on perceived fundamental ideological differences. Charap suggests that there was a growing perception of Russia ‘as the Soviet Union minus the other Republics’ following the Georgian War and, despite Russian support for US objectives between 2009 and 2011, many were ‘impervious to facts’ and Russia was seen as a global adversary (Charap 2014). These perceptions, combined with existing views of NMD, strongly influenced debates around the reset generally and NST specifically.

Although these narratives did not ultimately prevent ratification, they highlighted the on-going mistrust of Russia and tendency to view Russia through an ideological prism. This mistrust undermined the reset, both by limiting what the administration could negotiate on, adding additional emphasis to the already difficult issue of NMD and continuing to send mixed messages to Russia about how the US foreign policy elite viewed Russia. Indeed, such messages were particularly unhelpful for the reset because, as Tsypkin (2009: 783-785) outlines, the Russian political space has long been highly sensitive about their nuclear forces and even seemingly insignificant

statements and articles have caused angst in Russia. Similarly, as Arabtov (2011: 17) notes, existing Russian concerns about US missile defence plans were increased by the criticisms of Obama's decision to amend Bush's existing missile defence plans.

Existing concerns about concessions to Russia, regarding missile defence, were brought to the fore by the Obama administration's decision to review and ultimately replace existing plans to install elements of a missile shield in Europe with a European Phased Adaptive Approach (PAA), which slowed implementation and was an approach to develop a European regional missile defence system by 2020 (Goure 2012; Mankoff 2012b). In regards to PAA and missile defence generally, many Republicans and right-leaning analytical elites forcefully opposed, and then criticised, changes throughout 2009 (Mankoff 2012b; Deyermond 2012: 79-80). These challenges were frequently framed in terms of Russian imperial aggression and the US regaling on its obligations to democratic allies. Although PAA was not part of the reset and was never framed as part of the reset by the administration, it was viewed as a weakening of the US position on missile defence and a concession to Russia (Deyermond 2013: 505) by many critics of the reset. The debate around it contributed to concerns that NST could further limit the capacity of US missile defence to protect Europe and reinforced narratives of the importance of using NMB to contain Russian aggression.

In June 2009 Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, ranking Republican member of the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, opened a hearing focused on the prospects for US-Russian nuclear arms reductions by highlighting severe doubts about Russia as a partner. She referred to historical 'Russian duplicity' and, in relation to missile defence, argued that Russian objections were primarily intended to 'demonstrate to their former subject nations in Central and Eastern Europe that Moscow still exercises a veto over their foreign policies and security measures' (House Committee on Foreign Affairs 2009). Congressman Ted Poe suggested that 'the Russian bear is coming out of its cave because it got its feelings hurt because of the fall of the Soviet Union, and now it is trying to regain its territories' (HR111-4 2009a). In response to the decision on PAA Republican Congressman Howard

McKeon, ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, suggested that ‘the administration is heading down a path where it is willing to undercut our allies and cave into Russian demands on vital national security matters’ (quoted in, Nuclear Threat Initiative 2009). Republican Congressman John Boehner, the House minority leader, argued that ‘scrapping the U.S. missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic does little more than empower Russia and Iran at the expense of our allies in Europe’ (Baker 2009b). Republican Congressman Trent Franks, founder and co-chair of the House Missile Defense Caucus, argued that Obama ‘has disgraced this nation by breaking his word to loyal and courageous allies in the Czech Republic and Poland’ (in, Conway 2009), whilst Republican Congressman Bill Shuster, member of the Armed Services Committee, argued that:

The Obama Administration is taking a very risky gamble with missile defense. By appeasing Moscow, we have increased the danger of Russian imperialism for millions of innocent Poles, Czechs, Georgians, Ukrainians and Azerbaijanis (in, Conway 2009).

This reference to appeasement has strong historical connotations to CEE and, as Deyermond (2012: 82) points out, Republicans and commentators regularly employed this term, suggesting that changes in missile defence plans were to placate Russia. Sarah Palin went further, suggesting that a missile shield might be needed to protect the US directly from Russian missiles. In likening the Russian threat to that from Iran and North Korea, Palin failed to acknowledge the post-Cold War realities of threat from Russia and argued that:

We cannot and must not give up the right to missile defense to protect our population – whether the missiles that threaten us come from Russia, Iran, China, North Korea, or anywhere else’ (Palin 2010).

Conservative think-tanks and CEE ethnic lobbies amplified these narratives. Ariel Cohen, from the Heritage Foundation, argued that Russia had been seeking to ‘re-impose itself over much of the post-Soviet space’ and suggested that to cancel or change missile defence plans would encourage ‘further aggression against Russia’s neighbours’ (Cohen 2009). Suggesting that Russia’s position on missile defence in Poland was in the ‘image of past Czarist and Soviet regimes’, PAC President Frank J. Spula lobbied for a US military presence, arguing that:

It is apparent that history has a tendency to repeat itself when it comes to the Russian Federation of our 21st century [...] it is the hope and expectation of Polish Americans that the United States will not only sustain its full political and diplomatic influence for building a worldwide consensus [...] for condemning Russia’s reckless and menacing threat to attack and destroy Poland, but also if necessary, to deploy American military forces if needed, to protect the freedom and democracy that Poland has fought so long to establish and retain (Spula 2008).

These narratives were reinforced by responses to the NST preamble. Republican Senators and conservative analytical elites were particularly concerned that the preamble would grant Russia insight into, or influence over, US missile defence and focused on a perceived Russia deceitfulness and the potential consequences that granting Russia influence on US missile defence could have on US and European security. The preamble recognised:

The existence of the interrelationship between strategic offensive arms and strategic defensive arms, that this interrelationship will become more important as strategic nuclear arms are reduced (*NST*: 2).

Senator Kit Bond was concerned that NST would give ‘Russia a vote on our strategic defenses’ (US Congressional Record 2010a: S8053). Senator Mark Kirk suggested that proposals to bring Russia into NATO’s missile defences would ‘introduce powerful new opportunities for espionage against us, as well as a greater understanding of our defense capabilities and weaknesses’ (US Congressional Record 2010d: S10967). Senator McCain repeated his:

Long-held view that any notion of a Russian veto power over decisions on our missile defense architecture is unacceptable, and we should oppose any attempts by any administration to do so (HR111-897 2010).

Congressman Buck McKeon, Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, sent a letter, signed by fifteen other committee Republicans, to the US Senate urging against ratification because of fears that the administration might ‘allow Moscow to shape U.S. missile defense plans in exchange for its adherence to New START’ (McKeon 2010). Republic Jon Barasso outlined that he would vote against NST ratification based on the preamble (Barasso 2010). Senator Jim Demint suggested that NST, whilst making, ‘America’s erstwhile Cold War adversary happy’ the treaty could, ‘hamper our ability to improve our missile-defense system’ (Demint 2010). Indeed, he even implied that the United States should negate Russia’s deterrent (Acton 2011: 15). Similarly, a 2010 report by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations suggested that US missile defences’ inability to affect Russia’s strategic deterrence was ‘far less a matter of choice than a matter of technical and financial reality’ (Senate Executive Report 111-6 2010: 2). In December 2010 Ros-Lehtinen outlined that, in challenging threats to freedom and security, one of the main issues for the new head of the Europe and Eurasia Subcommittee would be missile defence and ‘countering growing Russian aggression against new democracies’ (House Committee on Foreign Affairs 21 December 2010). Practical efforts to limit information sharing with Russia on missile defence included Section 1228 of the

House version of the National Defense Authorization Act which sought to impose a ban on sharing sensitive missile defence technology with Russia. While the narratives may have been partly a domestic partisan tool there is little doubt that concerns about missile defence and Russian involvement were strongly held. Even after NST had been ratified and signed, thirty nine Republican Senators cautioned the Obama administration about granting Russia undue influence over the US missile defence programme (Nuclear Threat Initiative 2011).

Scholars such as Paul and Paul (2009: 27-28) and McCormick (2012: 89-104) have argued that the influence of CEE ethnic lobbies had decreased significantly since the 1990s. Nevertheless, they still had the opportunity to amplify narratives of Russian imperial threat (and the subsequent need for robust missile defence). The Central and Eastern European Coalition (CEEC) met with the principal architects for the Obama administration's foreign policy, including then Deputy Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor to the Vice President Antony J. Blinken and Michael A. McFaul, then Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russia and Eurasia. The meeting covered issues that reportedly included missile defence (Ukrainian Congress Committee of America 2009). During the CEEC 2010 Advocacy Day the groups met with a number of Congressional offices, including the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. One of the five core issues reportedly raised with policy-makers was Russia's foreign policy towards the region and the groups urged policy-makers to counter 'Russia's attempt in re-establishing its sphere of interest' (American Hungarian Federation 2010). Influential critics of NST sought to validate and amplify the CEE groups' narratives. John McCain praised CEEC for keeping policy-makers' focused on crucial security issues in the region and, in reference to Soviet oppression, stressed the importance of supporting the 'brave young democracies' that emerged from the Cold War and resisting Russian efforts to re-establish 'a Moscow-centred sphere of influence'. In relation to missile defence he argued that the United States must not 'abandon our allies in Poland and the Czech Republic in an effort to achieve a new arms treaty with Russia' (McCain 2009). As noted in the Introduction, there is no pro-Russia lobby to counter these narratives and to push for agreements between the United States and Russia, as the Indian-American lobby did over US-Indian nuclear cooperation (Kirk 2008).

The narratives of betraying Europe and providing concessions to Russia seem to have been at least partly based on reflexivity and assumption rather than analysis of the fact. Firstly, in regards to NMD, Obama came into office with a number of missile defence systems with various levels of development and proven effectiveness, whilst further technological advances created opportunities for different approaches (Fitzpatrick 2009). Charles McQueary, Pentagon Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, admitted in 2009 that he could not say ‘with high statistical confidence’ that strategic NMD provided ‘the warfighter with an operationally effective capability’ (HASC 111-10 2009). Indeed, the first test of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GBI) system under the Obama administration failed (US Missile Defense Agency 2011). In September 2009 Robert Gates (2009) outlined that the US ability to counter short and medium-range missiles had increased, whilst the 2010 *Missile Defense Review* ultimately suggested that the European PAA more directly addressed threats in Europe (US Department of Defense 2010a: 30). As such further research and modification seemed to stem, at least partly, from technical and intelligence reasons.

Secondly, Cold War comparisons of military imperialism did not reflect reality. Such arguments not only exaggerated the situation and employed heightened rhetoric but also ignored Russia’s military capabilities. Russia had plans for military modernisation, which, according to information at the time, included increasing the combat readiness of the armed forces (McDermott 2009). However, the modernisation was in part because of the desperate state of the Russian military, with modern weaponry accounting for no more than ten percent of the total inventory whilst conscription was under severe pressure (McDermott 2009). US officials were aware that changes in the Russian military posture were, as Clinton outlined to the Senate, ‘moving away from reliance on a large land-based arms and conventional weapons’ (S.HRG 111-897: 49). As Sokov noted in 2009, there remained a ‘continuing weakness of Russian conventional forces’ (Sokov 2009: 75). Russian military expenditure in 2008, 2009 and 2010 as a percentage of GDP was 3.3, 4.1 and 3.8 respectively. In the late 1980s the figure was approximately sixteen percent

(Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: accessed 16 May 2014). As such drawing like for like comparisons between Soviet and Russian military intentions and capabilities was, even if all other factors were equal, clearly not materially realistic. Accusations of empire restoration seemed at least partly based on perceptions of Russian identity.

### ***Domestic Constraints***

As outlined, it was the policy of the administration to reset relations with Russia. It was also the official White House position that the United States welcomed cooperation on missile defence with Russia and did not plan to undermine the Russian strategic nuclear deterrent (see, Phillips 2010). Indeed, there had been limited efforts to cooperate on missile defence in the post-Cold War between NATO states and Russia (Weitz 2010: 102-103; Mankoff 2012b: 330 Kassianova 2003). Although planning documents, such as the 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, detailed US ‘commitment to Europe and NATO, including through the development of European missile defense capabilities’ (US Department of Defence 2010a: 59&64), the administration made efforts to address Russian concerns. State Department officials reportedly provided detailed briefings to Russian officials to demonstrate that the Russian strategic deterrent could not be undermined by US plans (2014). Such outreach was important because, as Tsypkin (2009), Weitz (2010) highlight, NMD has been a challenging and divisive issue in post-Cold War US-Russian relations. The Russian administration had been clear about the importance of missile defence to bilateral relations. Medvedev even stated in 2011 that ‘after 2020, if we do not come to terms, a real arms race will begin [...] we can only think that this system is being aimed against us’ (quoted in, Bridge 2011). This position was reflected in Russian national security strategy, which identified a US first-strike capacity as the greatest external threat to Russia (Trenin 2011) and reinforced existing concerns that US missile defence could undermine the Russian strategic nuclear deterrent (Sokov 2007: 218; Tsypkin 2009: 781; Mankoff 2012b: 329).



However, the opportunity to further signal the desire to both improve relations generally, and to cooperate on missile defence specifically, was limited by the mistrust shown during ratification debates in two ways. Firstly, in the same way that the Clinton administration tailored the arguments for NATO enlargement to satisfy Senators who continued to see NATO's core function as deterrence against Russian aggression, so too did the Obama administration appear to utilise stronger language, focused on competition and the need to monitor Russia. Another think-tank expert notes, there was a need to 'curb left of centre rhetoric' (2014) whilst another Washington-based policy analyst (2014) suggests that the administration put verification 'front and centre' to justify for the urgency of ratification. Several US officials involved in NST negotiations and ratification have noted that those seeking ratification were aware of the need to tailor the message to a sceptical audience that had a mistrust of Russia. One former US official notes that NST proponents had to 'tailor language to satisfy Senate concerns' (former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014). Another senior State Department official involved in the negotiation and ratification efforts describes a 'unique ratification effort [requiring] all out effort'. This included recognition of the importance of framing the significance of NST in a way that would satisfy the sceptical Senate audience, meaning a strong focus on national security and monitoring Russia over improved relations (Senior State Department NST negotiator 2014).

There are clear examples of the shift towards competition and threat. Obama emphasised that the United States could 'not afford to gamble on our ability to verify Russian's strategic nuclear arms' (Obama 2010b). Biden argued that failure to ratify NST would 'endanger our national security', in large part because there would be no 'Americans on the ground to inspect Russia's nuclear activities, [and] no verification regime to track Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal' (Biden 2010). The White House's plea to ratify the treaty because 'every minute that the START Treaty is being read on the Senate floor increases the time that we lack verification of Russia's nuclear arsenal' (White House 2010d) is a further example of the increased focus on verification and a message about NST being to satisfy mistrust rather than to build trust. That Obama's top advisor on nuclear issues, Gary Samore, suggested that the

risk was not immediate, noting that ‘I am not particularly worried, near term’ (in, Butler 2010) suggests that this hardening of language was partly tactical.

The same was true of missile defence. Even though the preamble is not legally binding, and both states retain the right to withdraw from it, the domestic criticism was such that the administration was required to address the concerns in terms stronger than they would wish to have done in the context of their efforts to strengthen the reset. In response to concerns about the release of a Russian statement suggesting that Russia could withdraw unilaterally from the treaty if it determined a build-up in US missile defence threatening the strategic balance (Russian Federation 2010b), Hillary Clinton was unequivocal about the US freedom to pursue missile defence, free of Russian restrictions. Gottemoeller told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the United States had made clear that it would continue to improve and deploy missile defence and suggest that the Russians had felt compelled to produce the statement was ‘a striking piece of evidence that they were unable to restrict our missile defences in any meaningful way in the agreement itself (US Department of State 2010a). As with narratives around verification, actors seemingly hardened their message in relation to missile defence in an effort to secure ratification. Gates’ interpretation of Russian objections to missile defence is one example, suggesting to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that ‘it’s because we can afford them and they can’t’ (Senate Executive Report 111-6 2010), and to the Senate Committee on Armed Services that ‘the Russians hate it. They’ve hated it since the late 1960s. They will always hate it because we’ll build it and they won’t’ (S.HRG 111-897 2010: 28). Biden, during an address in Bucharest in October 2009, directly reassured the audience that the revised US approach to missile defence was not ‘to appease Russia at the expense of Central Europe’ and confirmed that the security of NATO allies was the overriding priority, including in relation to plans for missile defence (White House 2009).

The second consequence of the domestic narratives of mistrust, competition and the need to defend Europe from Russian aggression was the near impossibility of including binding restraints on missile defence or more formal cooperation and

information sharing with Russia. The reference in the preamble was only included, according to treaty negotiators, at the insistence of Russia and after careful consideration (US government official involved in negotiation and ratification of NST 2014). As such, negotiators were constrained in what they could negotiate on because of the known difficulties ratification would present. It is certainly the case that the administration had no interest in official constraints. The 2010 Ballistic Missile Defense Review, whilst outlining a commitment to renewing cooperation with Russia, was clear that ‘the administration will continue to reject any negotiated restraints on U.S. ballistic missile defenses’ (US Department of Defense 2010a: 34). However, the administration was, as Trenin (2011) and Mankoff (2012b: 330) have noted, constrained in what it could negotiate on in terms of cooperation. This was highlighted in March 2012 when Obama was overheard telling Medvedev that he could be more flexible on missile defence following re-election (quoted in, Goodman 2012). Analysts, including Simes (2010) and Gertz (2010a), suggests that the administration made tacit assurances to Russia regarding missile defence but could not formalise them because of concerns about ratification.

As such, Cold War-informed mistrust of, and competition with, Russia was an important feature of the NST debates and highlighted potential barriers to further improving US-Russian relations (Acton and Gerson 2011). This exacerbated Russian concerns, limited the potential for negotiation on missile defence as part of NST and provided a serious challenge to treaty ratification. As Hansell and Perfilyev suggest, although the United States informs Russia that it will not undermine its strategic deterrent, ‘the trust deficit between Washington and Moscow makes the latter question the real intention of the former’ (Hansell and Perfilyev 2009: 130). The hardening of language to address domestic concerns was also significant because, alongside the critical language of Republicans, it continued the post-Cold War trend of sending mixed messages to Russia. Analysts recognised this impact. Samuel Charap observed that during ratification Russia reacted immediately to anti-Russian statements, particularly to the Senate resolution, and all the statements made by officials ‘were very closely observed’ (Charap 2014). Eugene Miasnikov, Director of the Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies also suggested that ‘the new START debates are followed very closely in Russia’ (Miasnikov 2010).

Another analyst noted that because many Russians are unclear on the exact role of Congress and think-tanks, outrageous comments are taken seriously (Washington-based policy analyst 2014). Indeed, NST negotiators report that anti-Russian comments by non-administration actors were raised by Russian negotiators and were taken to be indicative of the United States' position on Russia. One negotiator recalls Russian delegates raising concerns about accusations that Russia would cheat (former US official involved in NST negotiations 2014), whilst another recalls seeing Russians 'hyped up' by the comments of Senators such as Jon Kyl and argues that Russian actors pay attention to opposition arguments and that they are not helpful for negotiations (Senior State Department NST negotiator 2014). This reinforced fears about the wider foreign-policy community not being committed to a reset or respecting Russia. Indeed, James Acton reports that senior Russian officials had expressed concern about a Republican return to office and the potential impact to missile defence (Pifer *et al* 2010: 67).

In conclusion, Cold War ideational legacy three made the ratification of NST more difficult and acted as a challenge to the wider reset by emphasising areas of perceived fundamental difference, based partly on lingering mistrust and a continued focus on viewing the relationship in ideological terms. Concerns around limits on missile defence were not enough to ultimately prevent NST from being ratified but the fact that they were raised provided evidence of retained Cold War attitudes and discourses in US political culture. The vocal concerns about giving Russia undue influence on US security plans, as well as the idea that they may be a threat to US allies, served to weaken the broader messages of partnership and trust that the Obama administration was trying to promote, limited the flexibility of what Obama and negotiators could compromise on with Russia and potentially limited US leverage with Russia on future issues.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Cold War ideational legacies continued to have an influence on shaping the US approach and foreign policy towards Russia in the case of NST.

While material factors, primarily US and Russian nuclear arsenals, were important in shaping the US ambition to work in partnership with Russia on arms control, ideational legacies influenced the way that this was framed, operationalised and debated. Of particular importance were legacies that developed during the Cold War and became entrenched in policy-maker thinking, as well as institutional practices and expertise. Previous experience and historical interactions provided a clear framework for achieving the treaty and, as such, were important for the successful completion of NST. However, this framework utilised Cold War era concepts that arguably reinforced an adversarial structure to arms control and signalled mistrust. While a new president, with limited connections to the Cold War, acted as a stimulus for the reset and NST, the continuity of actors involved from previous arms control negotiations served to further entrench a Cold War style bilateral, verifiable arms control approach.

Other legacies hindered the process and dampened enthusiasm for the wider reset. These were a steadfast commitment to national missile defence that, for some policy-makers, had to exclude Russian influence and protect US allies from Russia, and an inherent distrust of, and competition with, Russia from some sections of the foreign policy elite, primarily right-leaning actors. Domestic partisanship and Russia's war in Georgia in 2008 were complicating factors. However, within the background of the reset, Russia's need to reduce its nuclear arsenal and the election of younger leaders in both states, the context generally supported the feasibility of successfully ratifying NST. That it was so difficult and controversial highlighted barriers to future cooperation, further embedded anti-Russian narratives within US political culture and, as Deyermond (2012: 76) has addressed, potentially signified the institutionalisation of attitudes towards Russia within the Republican Party.

## CONCLUSION

### Introduction

When work began on this thesis the United States and Russia were in the early phases of the reset and future bilateral relations looked promising, with two younger and seemingly pragmatic leaders occupying the White House and Kremlin. At the conclusion of the research US-Russian relations are at perhaps their lowest point since the mid-1980s. Within the past eighteen months the United States has introduced new sanctions against Russia in response to the on-going crisis in Ukraine and alleged that Russia has violated the INF Treaty (US Department of State 2014: 8), whilst influential voices within the foreign policy elite champion a policy of neo-containment. However, at the same time the United States and Russia have continued to cooperate on the implementation and monitoring of NST and have worked together to address concerns of Iranian nuclear aspirations. This snap-shot is emblematic of the fluctuating nature of post-Cold War US-Russian relations and the mixed and unstable character of US foreign policy and thinking towards Russia. It also highlights the puzzle that this thesis has sought to address – why the United States has been unable to develop a stable or predictable relationship with Russia despite the significant benefits that this would provide to the US security agenda.

In tackling this issue the thesis has sought to analyse one specific factor: the influence of Cold War ideational legacies on contemporary US foreign policy towards Russia. To do this the study addressed three research questions. The primary question was how did Cold War ideational legacies influence US foreign policy towards Russia in the post-Cold War era? Two additional questions were addressed to support the primary question. The first was what ideational legacies were created through US actors' understandings of the Cold War and interpretation of its conclusion – what has been termed 'Cold War influences'. The final question, utilising the theoretical lens of Constructivism and FPA, was what mechanisms have served to sustain these legacies? The study acknowledges that there are many challenges to building a more positive relationship, including complications stemming from different relationships with third-party states and the lack of a strong

pro-Russia lobby within the United States in contrast with several domestic groups that are strongly anti-Russian. Similarly, there are a range of wider factors that influence US policy towards Russia, including Russia's own domestic and foreign policies. However, the study confirms the original hypothesis that Cold War ideational legacies are an important factor within this mix.

## **Findings and Contributions of the Research**

### ***Research Question: Cold War Influences - US Understandings and Experiences of the Cold War***

The influence of Cold War ideational legacies on shaping US foreign policy towards Russia was the primary research question of the thesis. As the primary research question, and being addressed across the core three case study chapters, the findings to this research question are afforded particular attention and form the longest section of the Conclusion. Prior to that the findings from the first supplementary research question addressing US understandings of the Cold War will be more briefly summarised in this section. The summary of the final research question, the mechanisms that created and sustained the ideational legacies, follows the summary of the influence of the legacies on shaping US foreign policy towards Russia. In order to highlight the ways in which Cold War influences combined to form the foundations of the ideational legacies this section limits itself to a broad summary of their role and importance, and details of the core understandings, and the following section details which specific influences combined to build the eight identified ideational legacies.

Cold War influences are individual ideas, understandings and experiences developed during the Cold War or through interpretation of its conclusion. They are predominantly cognitive but several address organisational or institutional issues, such as the origins of an organisation and entrenched ways of working. As the thesis has set out, to explore how ideational legacies have shaped US policy towards Russia it is necessary to recognise US policy-makers' understandings of the Cold War from that era as these understandings and expectations combine to form the

ideational legacies that shape policy by influencing actor ideas about US and Russian identity, their respective roles and interests (and, subsequently, the US-Russian relationship) and the nature of the international system. Table One (see Chapter Two) listed thirty-two individual Cold War influences that, between them, constitute the eight ideational legacies addressed across the thesis. The following section summarises which Cold War influences underpin each specific ideational legacy when outlining the influence of the legacies, demonstrating that each ideational legacy was influenced by a minimum of three Cold War influences. However, it is necessary to emphasise here the difference between Cold War influences that stem from understandings of the Cold War and Cold War influences that come from interpretations of the Cold War's end; the former more frequently applying to entrenched or fall-back thinking and the latter applying more frequently to specific expectations for the post-Cold War era.

While there was, of course, a wide array of understandings amongst policy-makers, a review of the highest level of state articulations and most significant policy and planning documents from the Cold War era outline a set of understandings that had consistency across the Cold War. These formed long-term narratives and framings within US political culture and bureaucracies that were particularly important in the post-Cold War era. These core understandings centred on six understandings of US-Soviet relations that, whilst varying temporally, appeared to have significant consistency across the Cold War. Three of the understandings focused on perceptions of fundamental difference based on political systems and values, morality and openness with the international community. Based on these understandings, a further three understandings focused on the nature of US-Soviet relations and the necessary foreign policy positions. These were the idea that the US needed to lead the free world in containing the Soviet threat across the globe, demonstrate the superiority of the US model and promote change in socialist states and, finally, the understanding that the relationship was zero-sum in ideational terms but cooperation was necessary on issues of mutual security (primarily nuclear security). Interpretations of the end of the Cold War saw five particularly dominant narratives concerning the post-Cold War era emerge. These were: the understanding that the Cold War was a US victory and a defeat for the USSR; that the United States



was unique state with a legitimised global leadership role; that globally states would move towards democracy with US support; that Russia would move towards Western models domestically and support US policies international, and; finally, that threats remained, particularly from nuclear weapons.

Apparent across the research is that some Cold War influences are broad and have relevance across different cases and policy issues whilst others are highly case specific. For instance, many of the broad understandings of the Cold War and expectations for the post-Cold War era that developed during the Cold War and through interpretation of its conclusion outlined in Chapter Two (and summarised above) have influence across more than one legacy. For example, the idea of the US as a unique state and with a legitimised global leadership role was an important feature of both the support for NATO enlargement as well as democracy promotion policies in the post-Soviet space. Conversely, the more issue-specific Cold War influences that were outlined across the case study chapters often had relevance only for one case or issue. For example, ideas that developed about the construction of arms control had influence only for the NST case study.

The identification of thirty-two specific Cold War influences and analysis of how they form ideational legacies highlights the dichotic nature between many of the stated expectations and entrenched attitudes. For instance, an assumption that Russia is going to move towards the West and support a US-led order is clearly in contrast with the entrenched mistrust of many actors for whom Russia constituted a threat rather than a partner. These conflicts contribute to inconsistent policies and framings that can contribute to mixed messaging and a lack of stability in the relationship. As has been outlined, different Cold War understandings have differing resonance with specific domestic groups and have more readily utilised dependent upon the context. For instance, entrenched mistrust of Russia seems particularly influential on many Republicans, conservative think-tanks and CEE ethnic lobbies whilst narratives of Russian moving towards the West usually only find traction when Russia is pro-actively support US foreign policy and security goals, such as arms control or the GWOT.

Case study analysis of NATO enlargement in the 1990s, democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space between 2001 and 2009, and the negotiation and ratification of NST identified eight ideational legacies that were informed by these Cold War influences, which subsequently shaped post-Cold War US foreign policies towards Russia. These eight ideational legacies are addressed in the following section. Each is summarised, alongside identification of the Cold War influences that informed each, and the impact of the legacies on US-Russian relations.

***Research Question: The Influence of Cold War Ideational Legacies on Contemporary US Foreign Policy Towards Russia***

The first case study, NATO enlargement in the 1990s, identified three specific Cold War legacies, underpinned by twelve Cold War influences. These three ideational legacies shaped the US decision to support and lead NATO enlargement. The first ideational legacy for some actors, particularly Democrats and liberal analytical elites, was enlargement being supported to consolidate the perceived ideological victory in the Cold War and to fulfil the Cold War mission of spreading universal values across a united Europe. This motivation was informed by the practices and ideas, formed during the Cold War era, of promoting political change and unification in Europe, the perception that NATO was a mechanism for supporting democracy and the idea that spreading democracy was beneficial to US security. Interpretations of the Cold War's end that influenced this position included the expectation that the end of the Cold War would lead to the geopolitical unification of Europe and enlargement of the West. As such this ideational legacy was premised on ideas about the nature of the international system.

Secondly, some actors, particularly Republicans, conservative analytical elites and CEE ethnic lobbies, supported enlargement primarily to continue NATO's Cold War mission – to contain potential Russian aggression. Despite the changed context, these actors and groups, many of which formed or developed their professional expertise during the Cold War, championed an essentially unchanged role for NATO. This

was influenced by Cold War era-forged perceptions of Russia as inherently aggressive and imperial, an entrenched mistrust of Russia, an institutionalised commitment to containment and the experience of using NATO to minimise Russian influence in Europe. As such this legacy was centred on entrenched perceptions of Russian identity and practices for containing Russian aggression.

The final Cold War legacy that influenced US support for NATO enlargement was the reinforced idea that the United States was a unique state, but this now needed to be directed into an active, international leadership role, especially in Europe. Enlargement was understood as a way to confirm this Cold War-era forged identity. It provided a means to have influence in Europe and provided a vehicle for wider, global influence. It also reinforced the image of the United States as the leader of the free world supporting democratising states. These ambitions were influenced by four Cold War ideas, experiences and understandings: the United States being the dominant Western power; the interpretation of the Cold War's end as a validation of US leadership and the United States having a unique role in the international system; the experiences of competition for influence in Europe and the perception that the United States had vital interests in the region; and the historical experience of using NATO as a tool to leverage political influence in Europe. This third ideational legacy was thus based on perceptions of US identity and the US role in the international system.

The three legacies all contributed to support for NATO enlargement and a preference for a rapid pace of enlargement, ahead of other possible options such as a deepening of PfP or a greater emphasis on enlargement of the EU. Enlargement and the internal debates about Russian threat undermined US messages of partnership and gave rise to tensions between the United States and Russia. The position on enlargement developed despite the fact that there was no direct threat to Europe, other options existed for promoting democracy and integration in Europe, the Russian military was weak and disorganised, there was little evidence that enlargement would facilitate democratisation, enlargement risked fuelling radical elements within Russia and undermined hopes of bringing Russia towards the West. Cold War influences shaped

a response that undermined US-Russian relations, despite the clear warnings about how this would be perceived in Russia, and created an issue of on-going and significant tension in US-Russian relations.

Two unique Cold War ideational legacies were identified in the democracy promotion case study. The first was a conflicted and uncertain perception of Russia's identity and political trajectory, as discussed in this paragraph and the two following paragraphs. The second - that parts of the non-Russian post-Soviet space had a particularly strong democratic trajectory and that the United States had a specific leadership role in the region – is discussed below. Russian cooperation after 9/11 convinced many actors that Russia was moving towards the West and conflated this with an expectation that it would move towards a more democratic domestic system, despite evidence of increasing centralisation of power within Russia. Later in the decade, as Russia pushed back against US agendas and there were further democratic set-backs domestically, a retained mistrust of Russia on the part of some actors resurfaced and Russia was increasingly viewed as a potential threat rather than a partner. Actors frequently framed Russian actions in familiar ways, using Cold War metaphors and analogies. This reinforced mistrust of Russia and the idea that the United States, in its role as Cold War victor, needed to hold Russia to account for democratic regression. Both these positions contributed to a tendency to overemphasise the role of ideology, already an entrenched feature of bilateral relations, in Russia's policy decisions and support for, or opposition to, US policies.

These two positions contributed to a disjointed and inconsistent democracy-promotion approach towards Russia and to US messaging about the importance it placed on Russian democratisation – with Russia often treated as a special case. Democracy promotion was further influenced by the fact that the limited tangible democracy promotion activities that did take place had distinct similarities to the tools and methods used during the Cold War. US understandings of the Cold War's end and expectations for the post-Cold War era influenced the US approach in two ways: firstly the assumption at the end of the Cold War that Russia would move towards the Western political model and, secondly, the expectation that Russia

would support a US-led international order. A further five understandings that developed during the Cold War also had lasting influence. There was a deeply engrained mistrust of Russia; an institutionalised perception of the Russian character being both deceptive and imperial; a history of viewing US-Russian relations through the prism of ideology; democracy-promotion infrastructure and expertise being created during the Cold War in opposition to the USSR; and decades of publicly criticising the Soviet system and portraying the US model as superior. As such this legacy centred on perceptions of Russia's identity and its role in the international system as well as entrenched practices for framing or managing policies towards Russia.

The second Cold War ideational legacy that influenced US democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space was the assumption that parts of the non-Russian post-Soviet space had a particularly strong democratic trajectory and that the United States had a specific leadership role in the region. This contributed to an approach that overly simplified regional trends and tensions and undermined US-Russian relations. US elites were excessively optimistic regarding democratic trends in the region, especially when new regimes were very pro-United States. Unlike other parts of the world where democracy promotion rarely trumped security or economic interests, it did so in the post-Soviet space by undermining US-Russian relations and arguably pushing Russia towards negative behaviours, such as an increased centralisation of power in Russia. For instance, tensions between Russia and other post-Soviet states were often instinctively framed in black and white terms as an aggressive Russia repressing an aspiring democratic state and the United States supported the non-Russian states in ways that Russian officials deemed threatening, such as the promotion of NATO membership.

Cold War understandings influenced this in five ways. Firstly, as the region where the Cold War was won, many US actors assumed that the new states would have a particularly strong democratic trajectory. The second influence was the narrative of the United States having played an important role in the 'liberation' of oppressed peoples and now having a unique role to play in the transition of the post-Soviet

states. The third Cold War influence was the entrenched idea, on the part of some actors, of Russia as an imperial state that sought to dominate its neighbours and repress their democratic freedoms. The fourth influence was based on the US experience of the region being the area where ‘friendly tyrants’ were not potential partners and the final influence was based on the same area also being the region where many democracy promotion organisations and practitioners began their work and developed their original missions. This legacy thus combined ideas about both US and Russian identities and the nature of the international system and their respective roles within it.

Taken together, these two legacies contributed to increasing Russian perceptions of US double standards and the instrumental use of democracy promotion and to undermine US-Russian relations. Inconsistent policies towards Russia, alongside US support for Russia’s neighbours, reinforced a dynamic of ideological and geopolitical competition, with Russia cast as a special case. Policies, such as proposed NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine, and an increasingly antagonistic rhetoric towards Russia enhanced Russian perceptions of insecurity.

The negotiation and ratification of NST highlighted the importance of ideas that formed during the Cold War and became institutionalised in policy-maker and bureaucratic thinking, practices and assumptions. Three Cold War ideational legacies shaped the negotiation and ratification of NST, discussed in this and the following two paragraphs. The first was an on-going acceptance of, and confidence in, Cold War-forged concepts of arms control and treaty models with Russia, notwithstanding the changed geo-political context. This was evident in the treaty details and explicit connections actors made between NST and Cold War era arms control treaties. A strong attachment to the original START model and its underlying concepts of bilateral strategic parity, nuclear deterrence and detailed verification reinforced adversarial structures in US-Russian relations. As such, while this Cold War legacy had positive impacts in providing a platform for cooperation and a solid basis for the reset, it further institutionalised an adversarial structure. This was strongly influenced by the logic of habit and institutionalised expertise. In particular it was

informed by the three Cold War influences. The first was recognition that cooperation over nuclear security was necessary despite the USSR remaining an enemy. The concepts used to manage this developed under the assumptions of threat and competition. Secondly, the perception at the end of the Cold War that nuclear weapons remained one of the primary threats and that Russia was a key actor in managing those threats was also important. Finally, the understanding of the Soviet Union as deceitful and secretive entrenched the idea of highly detailed verification of Russia being necessary. This legacy thus centred on conceptions of Russian identity and its role in the international system, as well as ideas about threats in that system and how they can be managed.

The second Cold War ideational legacy that shaped the negotiation and ratification of NST was the on-going mind-set of US-Russian relations being based on zero-sum competition and mistrust rather than partnership, despite Russia's importance to several key US security goals. This mistrust was often based on assumption and exaggeration rather than fact, highlighting the tendency to assume the worst of Russia. This was directly linked to notions of Russia's identity. This was most evident in concerns about Russian cheating and the representation of NST and the reset in competitive terms of relative advantage. Three Cold War influences were particularly important for this legacy. The first two stemmed from entrenched ideas about bilateral relations being defined by competition and underpinned by mistrust. The third influence was the Cold War-informed assumption that Russia would seek to violate arms control agreements unless strictly monitored. This legacy undermined the messages of the reset, limited what could be negotiated with Russia and forced the administration into using stronger language about Russia than it would have wished to within the context of trying to improve relations. As such Russian identity, again, was central to this ideational legacy.

The final ideational legacy that influenced the negotiation and ratification of NST was a strong commitment to missile defence that excluded Russian involvement (at least on terms that Russia would accept) and the perception amongst many right-leaning actors that missile defence was crucial for protecting CEE from potential

Russian aggression – typically portrayed in Cold War style language of defending democracies from an imperialist Russia. This legacy had six specific Cold War influences. The first four were core Cold War understandings: the USSR as an imperialist power – underpinned by Russian historical imperialism; institutionalised mistrust of Russia; analysis of Russia conducted through the prism of ideology; and efforts to foster European integration and bring CEE into the West. The two additional Cold War influences were that NMD had its origins in the Cold War, and was developed initially as a way to counter Soviet aggression and influence, and, secondly, the strong views of many Republicans and other right-leaning elites that NMD was an important factor in Cold War victory because it had modified Soviet behaviour. This legacy was a combination of ideas about Russian identity as well as the US role in the international system.

Overall, these three legacies shaped US policies and attitudes about Russia that had both positive and negative impacts on US-Russian relations. Perceptions of Russia as a security partner in terms of nuclear security, as well as the use of Cold War-era forged concepts of arms control, contributed to the successful and speedy negotiation of NST which was central to the reset. However, these Cold War concepts reinforced an adversarial structure to arms control which limits the longer-term potential for meaningful change whilst a steadfast commitment to NMD, in part to protect allies from Russia, and an ongoing mistrust of Russia for some US actors highlighted barriers to future cooperation, undermined the momentum of the reset and further embedded anti-Russian narratives within US political culture.

***Research Question: Mechanisms that Sustained Ideational Legacies***

Although the primary focus of the thesis is identifying Cold War legacies and their influence on US foreign policy towards Russia, the study has also located several mechanisms that appear to have played a role in sustaining the legacies. Several of the concepts that Constructivism and FPA suggest are important in shaping foreign policy can be located across the case studies, particularly in terms of identity shaping



interests and policy, the institutionalisation of mind-sets and expertise and the mission origins of organisations.

Historical experiences and interactions shaping perceptions of identity were clearly important, with references to consistencies in Russia's identity and role featuring across all three case studies. Despite changed contexts US actors frequently based assumptions and positions on memories of Cold War experiences and ideas, such as that Russia could not be trusted to comply with arms control treaties, in the same way that it was assumed that the Soviet Union would not. Similarly, the use of historical narratives featured consistently, influencing conceptions of US and Russian identities and interests as well as the international system. These included the Cold War being a victory for democracy, Europe being whole and free and the United States being the leader of the free world – these narratives directly informing US actor's preferences for NATO enlargement and fostering change in CEE.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given Russia's fluctuating progress, US actors appeared to frequently seek ontological security by framing Russia's actions in historical terms and by making Cold War analogies. Similarly, actors consistently referred to end points in Russia's trajectory – with the Cold War as the anchor – either in terms of moving away from the Cold War or returning to a Cold War era. This suggests a tendency to decode unfamiliar information into terms of the familiar, using Cold War analogies and conceptions of Russian identity and US-Russian relations to define contemporary issues. The Constructivist concept of private knowledge also appeared to be important. Despite repeated Russian criticisms over US policies and warnings of repercussions, particularly in regards to NATO, US leaders continued to underestimate the impact that their policies would have on US-Russian relations. This was in part because of national assumptions, not shared by Russian counterparts, concerning Russia's role as a compliant, junior partner, the legitimacy of US democracy promotion in other states and perceptions of Russian interests.

Self-perpetuating cultures were also evident. Despite the fundamentally different context and the need to cooperate with Russia, many US actors continued to view relations in competitive terms, mistrusted Russia and sought to achieve relative advantage over issues that did not have to be zero-sum, such as NST negotiations. The self-perpetuation often ignored not only the changed context but recorded evidence. For example, as highlighted, Russia had been compliant with START and was generally recognised by arms control experts to be a reliable partner, but many Senators and other conservative elites assumed that Russia was not compliant and had a tendency to base their views on assumption and exaggeration rather than detail. Institutionalised expertise and the logic of habit also featured in both the democracy promotion and NST case studies. Practitioners designing and delivering democracy promotion in Russia embarked on an approach that had similarities to Cold War democracy promotion, or drew directly from interpretations of its Cold War influence, whilst NST negotiators, as well as Senators and the administration, demonstrated a strong commitment to Cold War arms control models and concepts despite the fundamentally different context and recommendations of younger negotiators to adopt a new approach.

The idea that the background of individuals can matter, in this case their professional experiences and generation, also seemed important at times. While this issue should not be overstated, there were indicators of its influence across all three case studies, particularly so in regards to NST. Obama's lack of Cold War baggage appeared to make it easier for him, both practically and cognitively, to initiate a reset. Such a policy could have been far more difficult and unlikely had his Republican electoral opponent John McCain become president. Similarly, several NST negotiators reflected on the difficulties that older US officials had in adopting new modes of thinking. Institutional origins also played a role. Democracy promotion organisations such as Freedom House, think-tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and CEE ethnic lobbies all formed or dramatically expanded in opposition to the USSR. Across the case studies each utilised Cold War framings, analogies and metaphors and demonstrated a deep distrust of Russia. Their briefings focused on Russian threat and promoted a tough stand against Russia.

### *Contributions*

Looking across the span of the three cases, several themes emerge beyond the findings and data highlighted above. One important finding is the importance of domestic level actors, motivated by Cold War understandings, on US-Russian relations. This is so in broad terms addressed in the wider literature, such as the importance of the CEE electoral vote, but also in four other distinct ways. Firstly, as the NST case outlined, the Cold War-informed ideas and perceptions of Russia held by domestic actors, in that case Congress, limited what negotiation and cooperation was possible with Russia – with actors rejecting any meaningful cooperation on missile defence and limiting the scope of the reset – as well as influencing the administration discourse to secure ratification. Secondly, in their public positions, domestic groups such as the Heritage Foundation provided expert advice that reinforced Cold War ideas and imagery and maintained the prevalence of the Cold War in political culture. This was discernible in all three cases. Thirdly, institutionalised expertise of how to deal with, and manage relations, with Russia have the capacity to undermine presidential efforts to improve relations. This was apparent in both the democracy promotion and NST case studies. Finally, anti-Russian narratives, even if not representative of the administration, contributed to wider messaging towards Russia that influenced Russian perceptions of the wider US political community's perceptions. For example, leading Russian officials responded critically to the reports and activities of Freedom House whilst Russian NST negotiators raised the critical comments made by Republican Senators with US officials.

The second theme that emerges from analysis within and across the case studies is the existence of tension between stated expectations and entrenched ideas and attitudes. The assumptions of identity and role that underpin both categories were frequently in stark contradiction – such as Russia being imperial and untrustworthy and the idea of Russia being supportive of Western agendas and a partner on arms control. This tension was made worse by Russia's uneven progress, subsequently making both sets of ideas seem relevant at different times. That different domestic

groups have differing attachments to specific legacies further adds to the disjointed and often conflicting influence of Cold War ideational legacies. This was reinforced by differences between Russian specialists and non-specialists – the latter often relying more frequently on fall-back positions in times of uncertainty and failing to reflect on Russia's unique challenges. As such US actors have often been unrealistic and too hopeful in their expectations for Russia; whilst at other times actors have over simplified Russian actions and in their criticism and responses have overly framed tensions and actions in ideological terms and, on occasion, failed to treat Russia in the same manner as other strategically important, non-allied states. This contributes to inconsistent policy and mixed messaging.

The third theme apparent across all three cases was that the Cold War remains the reference point for almost all actors. Russian cooperation is frequently portrayed as confirmation of the end of the Cold War whilst Russian regressions are framed in terms of Soviet analogies and a return to Soviet behaviours. In continuing to anchor relations in a Cold War dynamic, actors frequently misunderstand or over-simplify Russian interests and challenges. The policies that can stem from this, such as NATO enlargement and the nature of support for the leaders of the Colour Revolutions, can push Russia towards, or at least provide a basis to justify, increasingly negative behaviours.

### ***Future for US-Russian Relations***

Any consideration of the future of US-Russian relations must begin by addressing the recent and ongoing debate about whether there is a new Cold War (for examples see: Legvold 2014; Monaghan 2015; Charap and Shapiro 2014). The findings of this thesis suggest that the recent downturn in US-Russian relations does not represent a new Cold War. It is certainly the case that, as has been outlined, many of the ideas and attitudes formed during the Cold War still have resonance and feature prominently in US domestic debates about Russia (indeed, this is an important factor in sustaining the 'new Cold War' narrative). Similarly, many of the present tensions arise over issues that were central during the Cold War, such as the future of Europe.

As such, issues such as Russia's annexation of Crimea, US sanctions against Russia and the increasingly critical and severe rhetoric on both sides (including about the role and purpose of NATO) are frequently framed in Cold War terms of aggressive expansionism by an authoritarian state, the importance of the United States defending democratic allies and, for some actors, the need to contain Russia.

However, whilst there are similarities in framings and policy proposals, as well as in the issues causing tensions, the downturn lacks some of the fundamental features of the Cold War. The current downturn lacks the scale and depth of the Cold War – failing to cover the entire global system or being based on fundamentally opposed and messianic ideologies as was outlined in Chapter Two. Furthermore, in practical terms, the international system is no longer bipolar, other states have significant influence, the United States has a massive material advantage over Russia and there seem few genuine fears of nuclear war (Legvold 2014: 74-78). Whilst the thesis has outlined that Cold War ideas and attitudes do shape policy, it has also outlined the cyclical nature of US-Russian relations and the mix of cooperation and competition. All three case studies highlight both institutionalised conflict as well as cooperation and this theme is clear during the present crisis. As noted above, despite downturn the two states have cooperated on curtailing Iranian nuclear aspirations and Russia policy-makers have repeatedly suggested greater coordination of operations in Syria. While the downturn is significant Russia is not the Soviet Union, tensions are not zero-sum, competition is not underpinned by fundamentally opposed global ideologies and cooperation remains alongside conflict.

However, whilst we are not witnessing a new Cold War the findings of this research would suggest that US-Russian relations are unlikely to stabilise in the near-term and will continue to go through the cycles that have been typical of the post-Cold War era. The advancement of a new generation of US officials with less Cold War experience indicates the potential for change. These officials are likely to be less influenced by personal and professional Cold War experiences and attitudes. However, this is likely to have only limited impact as it is clear that Cold War framings and narratives are highly embedded within US political culture and

bureaucratic practices. Cold War ideational legacies are built into US-Russian interactions, which contribute to a self-perpetuating culture. This is not only evident in policy and Congressional debate, but by the analysis and lobbying of certain domestic groups, including some conservative think-tanks and CEE lobbies. Furthermore, for as long as trade levels between the states remain low and no pro-Russia voice emerges within the United States, the functional use of anti-Russian narratives will continue to be seen as cost-free, which further reinforces Cold War framings and narratives within political culture.

The future of CEE and the non-Russian post-Soviet space is likely to remain central to the difficulties in US-Russian relations. The future of Europe featured heavily in all three case studies and, as the Ukrainian crisis demonstrates, remains one of the most important unresolved Cold War tensions. It is this region where several ideational legacies are most powerful, such as the idea of the unification of Europe, the democratising role of NATO, US leadership and the need to protect the region from Russian aggression. As Russia's foreign policy and guiding concepts suggest, it is unlikely to conform to post-Cold War US expectations in the region, and this will only further empower the entrenched attitudes and framings that are frequently relied upon in times of tension or uncertainty and contribute to the on-going practice of viewing Russian actions and US-Russian relations through a primarily ideological lens. Until US actors replace Cold War framings with analysis reflective of the contemporary context Cold War narratives of Russian identity will continue to have currency.

### **Areas for Future Research**

There are multiple future projects that could stem from this research. This section will limit itself to suggesting three possible studies. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is to employ the same methodological approach to a wider, and more updated, selection of cases – including the US response to the crisis in Ukraine. A study assessing a different set of cases and expanding the interview pool could add weight to the arguments made in this thesis and provide greater insight into the

contextual factors that distinguish when, and upon whom, Cold War ideational legacies have most influence.

A second possible area for further research would be to incorporate China into the analysis to build on the thesis' suggestion that Russia is a special case and often treated differently to other strategically important, non-allied states. During research interviews more than one practitioner remarked off-record that the mind-set and approach towards China seemed different than towards Russia and that they were not entirely sure why that was the case. As highlighted, several scholars have also made this point. Further study could directly compare US policy towards Russia and China in relation to the same cases or issues. Such research could expand the limited work on the similarities and differences in framings of Russia and China done by Tsygankov and Parker (2015).

A third future project option is to apply the same approach to assess the same cases but analyse the influence of Russian Cold War ideational legacies. This could highlight the impact of diverging perceptions and ideas of identity based on historical experiences and add further analytical depth to the impact of the Cold War on contemporary US-Russian relations. Such a study would also provide the opportunity to compare US and Russian officials' interpretations of joint events and meetings, such as the NST negotiations. This research would expand on the work of scholars such as Krebs (2010) who highlight the impact of divergent narratives as well as Tsygankov's (2004) analysis of how US narratives and aims after the Cold War were understood in Russia.

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